

# WITCH IN HAWKINS



A FANFICTION BY  
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## **Witch in Hawkins** by crazyrapunzel

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**Summary:** A teenage girl in Hawkins has special powers and no way to control them. Rated M for swearing and smut

# 1. Chapter 1

**Hello and welcome. How peculiar you came across this story and decided to check it out. I promise you, you won't be disappointed.**

**So because my summary was too long for the caption I'll give a longer summary here.**

*Amelia Thompson is a half-blood witch. Her mother is a witch and her father a muggle. She knows about the magical world because of her mother, but her father doesn't allow her to go to Ilvermorny. He wants her to be normal and suppress her powers. She is good at it, until she hits puberty. When she starts to fancy the king of Hawkins High, Steve Harrington, things get more out of hand. The biggest problem is his relationship with Nancy Wheeler. Some drastic changes in her life and the involvement with the Party and their battle against Demodogs change who Amelia is forever.*

**This story is set during the second season of Stranger Things and features my OC and all your favorite inhabitants of Hawkins. I didn't put it in the crossover section because there are no characters from Harry Potter mentioned and it is really just about Stranger Things with a little background on the Wizarding World. Might you not know anything about HP: shame on you. There are seven books waiting for you.**

**Read, cry, laugh and leave a review XxXx**

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## **The Hawkins High King**

"And here is another example of why the Com- the Soviets are dangerous. I am telling you, this is just like last time. I remember the day we-'

There was no one in the Junior class of Miss Canterbury who could take her serious or even bothered listening to her. Everyone was occupied with more important stuff. Teenage stuff. A girl with brown curly hair and legs too long for her body was crushing a pimple on

her forehead. A guy with short red hair and chubby cheeks was sticking the third piece of gum under his desk. Two girls in the front gave up pretending to listen a while ago and were talking about an upcoming party.

And then there was a girl in the back of the class who was drawing in her notebook. The sun burned comfortably in her back through the windows on the second floor. She sat so far away that the paranoia sounds of Miss Canterbury and her stories of the Second World War died out. If anything it was easier to focus on the birdsong outside. It was late in autumn for birds to be singing, but the girl in the back of the class could appreciate their effort.

There was nothing special about this girl. She had lived her entire life in Hawkins yet nobody knew her name. She was just another face in the crowd. A soft round face with light skin and a pimple to decorate it here and there. She had some light freckles running over her nose and cheeks too. Her eyes were a dull green colour that nobody would write a poem about. Her strawberry blonde hair had grown so fast over summer that she permanently tied it in a braid running down her back. She stopped a long time ago bothering to take care of her hair. Her wardrobe consisted mostly of flannel, lumberjacks and plain black T-shirts. Her work boots drummed absent-mindedly against her chair. If she had the nerve she would hum along with the birds, but this was the quiet-kind-of-girl. Amelia was perfectly ordinary. A typical teenager on a typical American High school. She even had a typical teenage crush on a cute boy.

*And what a boy he was.* It was hard to get someone out of your mind that was so perfect. Top player on the basketball team, most popular guy in Hawkins and hair that was *always* flawless. Yes, that is how you would sum up the crush of the girl in the back of the class. Steve Harrington was his name. She knew everything about him. She was also pretty sure he didn't know her name.

Amelia was interrupted in drawing doodles that sort of resembled hearts by a voice whispering in front of her.

'Hey can I borrow your pen?'

The question wasn't directed to Amelia. It was a conversation three

rows in front of her and it shouldn't bother her.

'Yeah, of course.'

But it did.

Because everything was beautiful about having a crush on a cute boy...except when he had a girlfriend. Nancy Wheeler. *Ugh*. Why did it have to be Nancy? The most perfect girl in the school. *Makes kinda sense, doesn't it?*

*Shut up.*

Nancy only asked a pen. She asked a pen from a guy sitting next to her and he immediately gave his pen up. Nancy got whatever she asked. Everyone knew that her best friend, Barbara, had run away from home and Nancy had a difficult time with it. Which only made her more sympathetic and sweet. Just the thought that this girl was too distracted to even notice Steve, but still had his complete attention, made Amelia's blood boil. She sat there, in the back of the class. Her look could kill, but everyone knows you can't kill with a look. Everyone knows you can't make things happen by thinking about them.

Those rules don't apply to Amelia.

Before anyone knew what happened there was a sea of blue liquid and a high-pitched yell. Nancy's pen had somehow 'leaked'. Maybe exploded was a better word. Ink ran down her desk and shirt. Amelia looked at the accident with shock. *Shit not again.*

'Miss Canterbury can I go to the bathroom?' Nancy asked with her perfect voice. After twenty apologies from the guy that gave her the pen and a careless smile from Nancy she disappeared in the hall. Amelia shrunk in her seat. Her head turned red and she quickly pretended to take notes. Nobody was looking her way, nobody suspected anything. Pens just leak. Nobody knew she did it. She wasn't hiding because she was afraid someone would point her out, but because of a guilty feeling. She didn't hate Nancy. Okay...not that much anyway. Those things just sort of...happened.

It was the end of the school day and Amelia was putting her books in her locker. Within a couple of minutes a familiar face walked towards her. Amelia waved her over.

'Hey Claire,' Amelia said with a smile.

'I got you something,' her best friend replied as a greeting. She placed herself next to Amelia and showed an orange flyer with black text and a badly drawn ghost drinking from a bottle. Amelia stared at it for a moment before looking at Claire.

'A Halloween party? What makes you think I'm invited?' Amelia asked. Claire rolled her eyes. 'Oh come on. Do you really think Tina will notice one more person there? She will be too drunk anyway. Come on, it will be fun.'

Amelia sighed and continued to put books in her locker. 'I'm not going.'

Claire leaned against the locker next to her and raised an eyebrow. 'You know Harrington will be there.' Amelia started to blush. She didn't look up from her locker. 'So what?' she said, trying to sound careless.

'Uhh, so you totally have a crush on him for some time now. Don't deny it, I know stuff,' she said wisely. Amelia chuckled and finally looked at her friend, closing her locker. 'You are so wise. But you are wrong. I don't have a crush on a douchebag like *King Steve*.' She air quoted with her fingers.

'No that is true. But ever since he's been with Nancy he has changed and *that* is when you got a crush, am I right?' Claire said with a smirk. The two girls knew each other too well. Amelia gave up trying and averted her eyes.

'Pathetic isn't it? And not just because he is unreachable or something. No, because he ditched those assholes he called his friends and stopped bullying people. I think he doesn't even mind his decrease in popularity.'

Claire chuckled. 'Everybody minds their decrease in popularity. Even

that perfect little girlfriend of his. Speaking of which,' she leaned closer, 'I heard their relationship is a bit...rocky.'

'Rocky?'

'Yeah. Like on the rocks.'

'I know what it means. But are you sure? Whenever I see them together they sort of seem...perfect.'

Claire smirked again. 'So you are jealous of Nancy?' She repositioned herself and crossed her arms. Amelia tried to look innocent. 'Not at all.'

'Is that why she is walking around with an ink stain on her shirt?' Claire asked.

Amelia blinked a couple of times. 'Her pen leaked.' Claire laughed. 'Sure thing. You did it, didn't you?'

Amelia had to be careful. Claire didn't know everything, but she had witnessed a thing or two. Amelia didn't want her best friend to get too involved in this crazy part of her and push her away as friend.

'Nobody can make pens explode. Maybe it was faulty, maybe she did something stupid and tried to hide it. Who knows. But it isn't important. What were we talking about again?' Amelia tried to find her way out of this topic. Even her embarrassing crush was better right now.

Claire stared just a moment longer, an unreadable expression on her face. Then she blinked and her cheery self returned. 'I told you Steve and Nancy fake their happiness. Anyway, on more important matters: what costume you've got for the party?'

'What party?' Amelia asked.

'At Tina's. Keep up will you.'

'I'm going then?' Amelia asked airily. Claire knew a victory when she heard it. She attacked Amelia in a tight hug. 'Oh yes you are! Go home and put something cool together. Just promise me one thing.'

Amelia smiled back at her friend. 'What?'

'Nothing flannel. I think you did the cabin in the woods look last year,' Claire said, looking at Amelia's clothing with distaste.

Amelia shoved her friend. 'Fine! I'll wear a woollen sweater.'

'Amelia Thompson, if you dare-'

'Oh shut it.'

Both girls laughed. Claire was 5 inches taller than Amelia and made this extra clear by wearing heels most days. Her hair was shoulder length and always styled according to the latest trend. The two knew each other since childhood and remained friends over the years. Despite the fact that they were as far away in personality as teenagers can get. But the heels, slim body or fabulous hair weren't what Amelia envied in her friend. Claire was free. Her parents let her do whatever she wanted. Claire could come home at 8 in the morning and nobody asked where she had been all night. She was also a lot more popular with the guys and had dated four guys already. Three of them were older and one even was a student when Claire was a freshmen.

Amelia never had a boyfriend. Or sex. Or even a proper kiss. She had been kissed by a boy on a summer vacation once, but he only did because he wanted to find out if he was gay. Turned out he was.

'Are you taking me home darling?' Claire asked, breaking through Amelia's thoughts. Amelia nodded and they walked to the parking lot where Amelia's AMC 1974 Gremlin was waiting. She brought Claire home and promised to show up at the party.



## 2. Chapter 2

### The Thompsons

Amelia turned into Cherry Street and drove all the way down. The houses went from big estates to small family homes to farmhouses along the street. Amelia lived in a farmhouse at the end of the road. She turned into the drive and parked her car. She sat there, behind the wheel, just staring for a moment. Staring at her family home. She might not be free, but she was happy. She loved her parents dearly and never dreaded going home. Yet she couldn't help wanting more.

She stepped out of the car and heard the barn door open. Her father, a tall man with a lined face and strong hands, walked towards her. He was dusting the dirt off his jeans.

'Hello sweetheart,' he greeted with a smile. 'Happy Halloween.' Amelia smiled back and walked up to him. 'Happy Halloween. How is everyone doing in there?' she gestured towards the barn in which they kept sheep and goats. They had a piece of land too where they grew crops.

Her father smiled and looked over his shoulder. 'Betty is misbehaving as always. Nothing I can handle. Mind helping me out later? Or do you have homework?' he asked.

'Oh will you give her a break Scott.'

Amelia and Scott looked up to see the mother of the family, Hestia Thompson. She was leaning in the doorway to the house. Amelia looked a lot like her mother: the same blonde hair and green eyes. Hestia was slimmer around her waist and breasts and about ten inches taller. Her hands looked worn and fragile. And the oddest thing was her way of dress. She would always show up with a piece of clothing you couldn't find in any store. Whether it were cape-like coats or leather boots with upturned noses; Hestia never stopped amazing people.

'I was just asking her if she had some time on her hands Hestia. Don't you make a fuzz now,' Scott replied grumpy.

Hestia smiled a small, secretive smile. 'I think Amelia has enough to do on Halloween.'

Amelia blushed a little and stepped into the house after her mother. Her father followed suit. They made tea and sat in the living room together. There was a long comfortable silence before Amelia started talking.

'So there is a party tonight-,'

'Good. You're going.'

Two Thompsons looked astonished at the third. Hestia had that smile on her lips again. 'You should go. Seems like fun.'

'A party? With boys and alcohol? Hestia, maybe we should talk this over,' Scott said.

Hestia shook her head. 'Amelia tell me. Do you want to go?'

Amelia looked from her mother to her father and back to her mother. 'I...not really. But Claire sort of ordered me to come and I don't want to let her down so I thought...I'd go.'

Hestia spread her arms like she just made a clear statement. 'See Scott. Our daughter doesn't even want to go to the party. She doesn't want to drink and have a hangover. She doesn't want to wake up in a boys bed that won't remember her the next day. I think it is safe to let her go.'

Amelia looked at her father. He started nodding his head.

'What is wrong with you two? If I ask to go to a school you say 'never gonna happen' but when I ask about a party you basically kick me out the door?'

A new silence fell. This silence wasn't comfortable. Hestia placed her arms around her body and shrunk in her chair. Scott sat so still it looked like he was made of wax. Amelia could hear the sheep bleat in the barn.

'Amelia,' her mother began. Her voice was barely audible.

'Amelia we put an end to this a long time ago. I won't pay for a school that teaches you magic tricks!' her father said, suddenly angry.

Amelia started to heat up. 'It isn't about tricks! It's about control! I have none. Whenever I get angry weird shit happens!'

Scott shot to his feet. 'No swearing in this house! We are not discussing this again! Go to your room!'

Amelia was keen to escape the living room anyway. She stomped away. When her feet stomped on the stairs the railing shook. Not because it was an old house. Not because she was that heavy. But because she was angry and when Amelia was angry weird shit happened.

In the attic of a farmhouse at the end of Cherry street stood a teenage girl in front of her mirror. She had a wide room at the top of the building. There were windows on both sides. In the middle of her room stood a big comfortable bed. Next to the bed a floor-length mirror. And in front of the mirror a girl that was trying to decide what to do.

If she was going to show up to the party as herself nobody would notice her. Or worse, they might notice she wasn't invited and throw her out and laugh behind her back. She could also wear a mask and go for anonymous fun. Dance and go crazy and not giving a shit about who saw. No one would know it was her.

No, there were better ways. Amelia pulled her shirt over her head and unzipped her pants. There were days when she hated looking at herself in the mirror. The huge hips and far from flawless skin made her insecure. But there were also days, just like this one, were she could admire her body and actually like it. She swayed to *Another brick in the Wall* and mouthed along with the lyrics. She placed her hands on her body and danced seductively. Amelia wondered whether other girls did this in front of the mirror too. She must be the odd one out, but right know that didn't matter. Suddenly an idea hit her. An idea that was sort of obvious if you knew how to look.

*She was freaking pretty.* Not like a model from a magazine, or even like the popular girls at school. She was her own pretty. She had a

hot body and she was ready to share it with someone. Amelia started unravelling her braid until all her long strawberry blonde hair fell around her body. It reached just above her bottom. Her hair was pretty too, but it was a different kind of pretty. Innocent and natural. But right now she felt sexy and daring. Without thinking about it too long she located a pair of scissors and cut off a big strand of hair.

It fluttered to the ground in what seemed like slow-motion. Amelia watched the hair on the ground with a mixed feeling of fear and excitement. It was such a bold move. Probably a bad one too. Pretty girls had long hair. *But not so long they tie it in a braid forever.* Amelia felt like two people were battling for dominance in her head. One she called Claire. This voice wanted her to cut it all off and show up to the party with condoms packed in her bag. The other she called old Amelia. Old Amelia was wondering why the hell that strand of hair was lying on the ground and why she didn't go to bed already. But old Amelia was *old* Amelia and had little place with Clai- no, new Amelia.

New Amelia put the scissors to her hair and started to cut it all off.

### 3. Chapter 3

#### The invisible girl

Around 10 o'clock Amelia's Gremlin turned into the street where the party was. The entire street was lined with cars and people walking around in costumes. Amelia parked her car and got out. She nervously lifted her strapless top to make sure her breasts wouldn't fall out. Once she put a foot on the ground she remembered she was wearing heels (for the second or third time in her life) and steadied herself on her car. She closed the door and took a deep breath. Saying to yourself in your bedroom that you looked fine and would slay this party was easy. Actually arriving and having to deal with *people* was a lot harder.

When Amelia was done cutting her hair to a new shoulder-length haircut that she curled, she remembered the costume part. Luckily an aunt had once given her an old costume 'just in case'. Back then Amelia hated it, but today it felt like a personal joke. Because of course the sister of her father would give her a witch costume. It had huge flaws. It was too childish to begin with. But after some styling and touching up with scarfs she managed to make a perfectly sexy witch outfit complete with clip-on pointy hat.

Make-up had been another challenge but she had seen Claire do it a million times so Amelia actually managed fine in the end. A bit overdone make-up wasn't a big deal anyway when you wore a costume.

She walked over the lawn where a group of people were cheering. In the middle a guy was held upside down, drinking beer from the tube. Amelia decided inside would be safer. As she walked along she noticed the first looks directed her way. It was a new feeling. They weren't looking at her as if she was a nasty stain on the world. The guys seemed to like this look a lot better.

'NO WAY!' Claire exclaimed once she saw her best friend. Claire her eyes seemed ready to pop out. Luckily she was a nurse tonight so she could fix that.

'What happened to your hair?!' she asked, starting to find words after some time of staring.

Amelia's smile fell. 'You like it?'

'Of course I freaking love it! You look so mature and and....hot!' Claire asked Amelia to spin around once more. 'And the costume is on point! Sexy yet uniquely you! Why have you been hiding all this from me all those years?'

Amelia chuckled. 'Not just from you. But I felt it was time for a change.'

Claire stuck up her thumb. 'Good choice. Now let's get you a beer.'

Amelia didn't particularly like beer or alcohol in general, but you don't drink for the taste. She did like the buzz that started to form in her head as she danced and drank some more. People seemed to notice her. As she and Claire were dancing a lot of eyes were directed their way. Amelia actually enjoyed her time there. The music, the booze and the good feeling she had about her new look made her feel ecstatic. To top things she finally spotted Steve Harrington. He was wearing all black with sunglasses on. It took Amelia a moment to realise he was Joel Goodson from *Risky Business*. And sure enough a moment later she spotted his Lana. Nancy was dancing with a cup to her lips. It seemed like they were having a wonderful time.

Claire noticed what Amelia was staring at and turned them around so she wasn't facing him anymore. Claire gave a sympathetic wink and continued dancing wildly. Amelia tried to shrug it off and enjoy the moment.

'I'm going for new drinks,' Claire announced and she was gone. Amelia stood a bit awkwardly by herself, but soon enough a guy in roman costume came up to her with a huge smile on his face.

'You can't use magic in here you know,' he said in her ear.

'What?' Amelia asked, a bit worried but mostly confused. The guy smiled again and brought his mouth to her ear again. 'Well you got me under your spell.'

Amelia chuckled. She hadn't expected to be the subject of bad pick-up lines, but it was actually funny and flattering. She danced with the roman guy for a moment. However, he started to come closer and closer. He placed his hands on her hips and Amelia pushed them away.

'Come on baby. Don't be like that. The vibes are all good,' he purred in her ear. This time she didn't like it. She wanted him at some distance. He tried to place his hands once more on her and she swatted them away. Amelia felt a spark of electricity between her fingers. She couldn't stay or she might *actually* put him under a spell. And not the pleasant one he wanted. So she quickly pushed past him and walked out the front door.

The fresh night air made her feel better instantly. Someone pushed a new drink in her hand and she continued to walk off the porch into the grass lawn.

'Would you look at that beauty,' a voice said behind her. Without thinking she turned, slightly annoyed that someone would talk that way about her but pretending she couldn't hear it. That was also the moment she recognized one of the two guys standing behind her.

'What the hell! Amelia is that you?'

Amelia blushed horribly. Who else could it be except Steve Harrington and one of his friends. She was about to stutter something, but took a second to think. No, with this new look came a new personality. She wanted to be stronger, more interesting.

'Yes it's really me. Steve right? And..,' she asked, turning to the friend who had said she was beautiful. 'Brandon. Pleasure to meet you. My apologies for that rude remark,' he said with a genuine smile.

Amelia smiled back. 'No problem. Not the worst I heard tonight.' She dared looking back at Steve, who still looked at her like she was a ghost. 'What happened to your hair?' Steve asked.

*Wait, hold up. Steve knew her name and that she cut her hair?* 'Didn't like it so it had to go. You like it this way?' she asked, pushed her hair up in a playful way. She probably wouldn't have the courage to

flirt like this when she was sober.

Steve nodded. 'Like it a lot. Your entire look is kind of...wow.'

Amelia blushed again but hid it behind the cup that she brought to her lips. 'So you like the party?' she asked after taking a sip.

'Yeah it's better than last year. Someone puked in the kitchen. Was a straight up mess,' Brandon said. Amelia shrugged. 'Could still happen. Wouldn't call your luck yet with that guy in the toga walking around.'

Both guys laughed. Amelia wondered why she was suddenly so good at this. Was a bit of alcohol all it took? Someone called Brandon over and he left Amelia and Steve with a short goodbye. There was a moment of silence. Amelia bit her lip, unsure what to say.

'I never noticed before how...,' Steve started. He tried to keep eye contact but failed. He cleared his throat and tried again. 'I never noticed before how...'

Amelia chuckled. 'You never noticed me before.'

Steve ran a hand through his perfect hair. 'Well, I know you. You are in Nancy's history class right? You used to have really long hair, always in a braid. And you are very...quiet.'

Amelia looked at him in wonder. 'Yeah that's me. I didn't know...well I never noticed...'

It was Steve's turn to chuckle. 'You didn't know I *did* notice you.'

Amelia swallowed. 'Exactly.' Another stretched silence fell. Amelia had a nasty feeling that Nancy would turn up any moment. 'Doesn't your girlfriend miss you?' she asked, looking at the ground. Steve sighed. 'She is getting herself hammered. I tried to stop her but it seems like a lost cause. Anyway I wanted to step away for a second. So are you here with anybody? A boyfriend or date or something?'

Amelia snorted. 'You are kidding right? I never had a date in my life. Okay that was oversharing, sorry. Guess I'm a liiiiittle more intoxicated than I thought.'



'Ha don't worry. Half the people here won't remember a thing in the morning. But you never had a date? How is that possible?' Steve asked politely. The tension started to loosen up. Amelia took another sip. 'You said you noticed me. Then you must know I'm not very popular with guys. Tonight is a bit of a first.'

Steve stared at his shoe that was drawing lines on the ground. 'But guys must notice that you are a nice girl and good company, right?'

*Nice girl. Good company. That was a start.* 'Not really.'

Steve looked up in Amelia's eyes. 'Well, they should.'

Amelia smiled as she stared back in his dreamy eyes. 'You tell them for me?'

Steve smiled back and inched his feet closer without realising. 'I will.'

And suddenly Amelia had her first moment where she could stare into those eyes. Those eyes that weren't just a popular boy or even just a nice boy. She noticed so much more in that moment. Hesitation. Fear. Sadness. Doubt. Anger. And even something deeper. Something like a dark secret that he wanted to put away for nobody to see. However when Amelia stared at Steve in that moment it was all written on his face. She felt like she knew him.

Little did she know that Steve felt a similar surge by looking at her. He saw something new and something hesitant. He knew it wasn't easy for her to show up here tonight looking all sexy and inviting. He knew she had to battle her insecure self to even talk to him.

He saw a girl that wondered why she wasn't invisible to him.

She saw a boy that wanted a break from drama.

Someone hurled a baseball at Steve and missed his head by an inch. Steve flinched and took a step back. Now that the concentration was broken they noticed how close they had been. Steve laughed airily and threw the ball back.

'I should go.'

'Yeah. Sure.'

And with a last long stare Steve turned away and went back inside. Amelia felt stupid and euphoric at the same time. Was this a good moment or not? Should she be worried about his relationship or was it really on the rocks? Should she see this as a bonding moment or was this his realisation that yet another girl had a stupid crush on him?

After some time Amelia returned to the house too. Inside she looked around for Claire but couldn't spot her right away. Amelia let her eyes scan the crowd when she suddenly noticed another familiar face staring back at her. Jonathan Byers was one of the closest things she had to a male friend. He was staring at her with wide eyes.

'Amelia? What-How-When-' He stuttered. She smiled as they got close enough to speak over the music. 'You need to finish at least one of those questions Jonathan.'

'Why did you cut your hair?' he asked incredulously.

'I wanted something new. You like it?' she asked simply. Jonathan stared a moment longer and had a weird expression on his face. 'Not really.'

Amelia stared in surprise. 'What? Why? Everybody's telling me it looks good!'

Jonathan shrugged. 'I liked your long hair better. It was pretty.'

'Well thank you for that wonderful commend. What do you want me to do? Paste it back? Thank you for making me feel ugly,' Amelia said crossly. At this point she had so many drinks that she stopped caring what people were thinking. She crossed her arms and was looking for a way out.

'Amelia, please. I didn't mean-,'

Suddenly someone pushed Jonathan aside. It took Amelia's slow mind a moment to realise it was Steve. He pushed past everyone to get to the door. He looked upset. Jonathan and Amelia both noticed this and had opposite reactions. Jonathan turned around and went to look

for Nancy while Amelia started to follow Steve out.

Steve was walking fast. His neck was tucked between his shoulders and his hands were stuffed in his pockets. He kicked an empty beer bottle away and hit a car.

'Steve!' Amelia called.

'Go away,' he replied. Okay, absolutely angry. Amelia stumbled on her heels. She had a hard time concentrating on walking and following Steve and yelling all at the same time.

'Steve please. You need someone to talk to.' He didn't stop. He didn't even indicate he heard her. 'I can drive you home if you like,' Amelia offered.

'You're too drunk to drive,' he said over his shoulder. 'So are you,' she said back. Steve passed car by car, walking towards his own. Amelia tried again. 'Steve let me help you.'

Steve suddenly turned around so quickly that Amelia bumped into his chest. Steve turned around her and walked her back into the wall on the other side of the sidewalk. Amelia stood there, pushed up against a wall with a very frustrated Steve looming over her. Maybe she should be scared or intimidated. All she really felt was a quick heartbeat and an aroused feeling between her legs.

'And what are you going to do Amelia?' Steve breathed. He tried to withhold the anger. 'Are you going to give me a hug and tell me everything will be fine? Will you make me a cup of tea and talk about my feelings?'

Amelia had multiple reasons why she couldn't reply. Her intoxicated head being one of them. She searched his eyes for the right answer. 'I'll do whatever you want me to do,' she whispered in the end.

Steve closed his eyes and breathed sharply. Amelia studied the lines on his face and how he seemed to be having a hard time. Her hand found his cheek and Steve leaned into her palm. He opened his eyes and Amelia could see he held back tears. They could be from anger but her guess was that he was hurt. That Nancy did something to hurt

him. Steve was sad and she wanted to make him unsad.

Amelia kissed Steve. It was a quick peck on the lips. She opened her eyes after the kiss to look at his expression. He wasn't surprised. He just looked very pained.

'S-sorry,' Amelia said.

'No.'

'No?'

'No sorry.'

Steve kissed Amelia back. He held a hand behind her head so she wouldn't hit the wall too hard as he kissed her roughly. It was a sloppy, needy kiss. It wasn't the best kiss Steve had ever given, but to Amelia it was everything. It was her first kiss. The kiss was like a first crack in a dam of sexual tension. Now that it had started she didn't want to stop. Her hands found his waist and pulled him closer to her.

Steve pulled back and looked in Amelia's eyes. He was searching for an excuse to walk away. Searching for doubt in her eyes. 'Are you sure you want to help me?'

Amelia smiled. 'I want to help both of us. Where is your car?'

The car ride felt weird. The space between them seemed to stretch every minute. Amelia couldn't stop staring at the side of Steve's face. She was actually in the car with him, on their way to his house. To his room...

Steve seemed eager to be home too. He drove too quickly and kept glancing at Amelia. He kept taking deep breaths that came out shaky. Without knowing why, Steve's breathing turned Amelia on terribly.

Once they reached the Harrington home Steve basically ran to the door with a hand on Amelia's back. He fumbled for a moment with the keys. Once the door was closed behind them Steve took hold of Amelia's shoulders and pushed her against the door. He looked hungrily down at her and licked his lips. Amelia felt her heart race like a maniac. Then he leaned down and kissed her again. She let

herself go in the kiss and enjoyed every second of it. Steve's tongue was pressing against her lips, asking for entrance. She gave it and their tongues found each other.

The breathing of both teenagers got faster. When Steve pulled back Amelia was left panting like she ran a mile. Steve let his eyes travel from her eyes to her lips and further down. There was a whole minute of Steve looking at every part of Amelia's body and Amelia staring at Steve's eyes. Maybe this should feel uncomfortable, she thought. Maybe she should ask him to stop. But she didn't feel uncomfortable. She liked the way he *noticed* her.

'Is somebody else home?' Amelia whispered.

Steve's eyes found their way back to hers. 'No.'

Steve took her hand and guided her up the stairs. They dove into his room. Amelia came in first. It was a basic room with a big bed and a window looking out over the pool. She walked up to his desk and leaned against it. She watched Steve close the door and dispose of his jacket, shoes and socks. Amelia made sure her breasts were pushed out as much as possible and leaned back on the edge of the desk.

When Steve looked back up he took another moment to take her in. He swallowed visibly and walked up to her slowly. He stood in front of her, close enough to kiss her again, but he didn't. He toyed with her. Amelia liked it and smiled her teeth bare. Steve gave her a soft kiss on her jaw. Then he went down on his knee and took off her heels. His hands were on her ankles and moved along her sides when Steve stood back up. The hands stayed on her hips, just where she needed them. He pushed her hair behind her ear and kissed her neck. Slowly. Just right to leave hickeys. Amelia's eyes fluttered close and she moaned in pleasure.

Steve made a similar sound when his lips were at her ear. 'I like hearing that sound from you.'

Amelia chuckled softly. 'I like what you are doing to me.'

Steve stopped kissing and brought his face in front of hers again. One hand found the zipper on her corset. 'I am going to do a whole lot

more to you.'

The zipper went down and the dress fell to the ground. She was left with only a pair of knickers, her breast bare. Steve didn't miss that little detail. His eyes roamed her body and moments later his hands were massaging her breasts. Amelia moaned again. She remembered the clip-on hat and took it out of her hair.

'I must say, you don't make a convincing witch. Witches are ugly and old. You are young and the most sexy thing I've ever seen,' Steve murmured.

Amelia chuckled. 'I'll make witches sexy on my own then.'

Without hesitation she pulled Steve's shirt over his head and admired his chest. Her hands moved over his smooth chest. The first light hairs were showing on there. She left a trail of kisses all over him. Her hands moved down to his belt and undid them. His pants fell to the ground and suddenly they were even. His erection was clear to see through his boxers.

Steve made a groaning sound and pushed Amelia on his bed. She fell in the soft blankets and pillows and couldn't wait for Steve. Her eyes blinked seductively. Steve snapped on a dim bed light so they could see each other. Then he climbed on top of her and started kissing again. Their mouths were open and a lot of gasping and pulling back happened. Steve started grinding his hips against hers and Amelia felt like she was going to explode right then. Steve moved from her mouth to her breasts. His tongue circled one nipple while his hand found the other. He pinched the nipple between his thumb and finger. Amelia gasped at every tug or suck.

'S-steve. I can't wait.'

Steve stopped and looked down at the girl beneath him. In that moment she was everything Steve wanted and needed. He felt a rush go through his chest. It wasn't just lust and passion, it was more.

He sat up and took her knickers off. Amelia moaned when the cold air touched her wetness. Steve made quick work of his boxers and opened a drawer to take a condom. Amelia cursed herself for not

even thinking about that anymore. Thank god Steve was a gentlemen.

Steve put the condom on but before he placed himself he leaned down lower and ran his hands over her thighs. First the outside, then the inside. With every stroke his fingers inched closer to where she needed him. Amelia groaned in protest. Steve smirked.

'So needy,' he said before his head delved between her legs and his tongue found her vagina. Amelia was so surprised by this that she screamed out loud. Luckily nobody else was home. She lifted her head to watch Steve's face disappear between her legs. The sight provoked a new rush of wetness going down. Amelia gasped with each lick and Steve moaned in harmony with her. All this was just too much. She was going to-

Steve stopped. Amelia nearly shouted at him for stopping in that moment. Before she could protest he was over her. Her legs went further apart and Steve pushed his cock in. Amelia bit her tongue so hard she tasted blood. *Why the fuck did it hurt so much?!* In the heat of the moment she had forgotten she was a virgin (until now) and that she didn't even know how much it was going to hurt.

'Are you okay?' Steve asked, noticing how her face scrunched up in pain.

Amelia breathed and got used to the feeling of having Steve inside her. 'Yeah. Sorry. Just uh...can you start slowly?' Stupid girl. She should have told him. Would he stop if he knew she was a virgin?

'Of course,' he whispered in her ear. He started moving very slowly. Amelia started to get used to the feeling and with every movement it got less painful and more pleasurable. Steve started biting softly in her earlobe to get them both back on their highs. Amelia appreciated every bit of it. Sure enough the pace was too slow for her.

'Faster. Please,' she breathed.

Steve complied. The pace quickened and Amelia started to really, really enjoy it. Her breathing was faster again. Her toes curled up and she placed her legs around his body. Steve's breathing was faster as well. He was making more sounds of pleasure and continued to bite

and lick her ear.

The pace quickened even more. Amelia surely felt herself getting close to release.

'Steve. Look at me.'

Steve stopped biting her ear and brought his face in front of hers. His face was flushed and his pupils were dilated. He bit his lip, refraining himself from groaning too loud. Amelia stared in his eyes as Steve continued to pound inside of her.

'Amelia,' Steve breathed. Just that one word did so much for her. She felt encouraged to just come already. Quicker and quicker Steve fucked her. Amelia wanted to scream a lot of dirty things but thought it better not to. The thrusts became deeper and harder and she couldn't hold it anymore. Her eyes rolled back and she moaned loudly when her dam broke. Amelia felt herself become liquid and she got goose bumps all over her body.

Steve watched her and thrust one more time when he came too. His warm sperm spread inside the condom and Amelia loved the feeling. They stayed in that position a little longer, both regaining their breath. They kept staring into each other's eyes as they came back to their senses. Steve let his head fall down against her shoulder for a moment as he continued to breath rapidly. His warm breath tickled the skin on her collarbone.

After what felt like hours Steve moved out of Amelia and disappeared into the bathroom. Amelia stayed like she was, unable to think. She was suddenly so tired. All she wanted was to fall asleep. When Steve came back in the room he found Amelia still in the same position. She was taking up all the space like this.

'You think you could share?' he chuckled.

Amelia looked at him and understood what he mend. 'Sorry.'

Steve stepped into the bed and drew the covers over both of them. 'Don't say sorry for everything. You don't have to.'

Steve placed his hand on her cheek as they faced each other in the



bed. Amelia smiled back and nodded. They stared into each other's eyes for a little longer. Amelia should start thinking again, but she didn't want too. She still felt intoxicated by the alcohol *and* the sex. Her brain was simply shut off for now. Steve seemed to be thinking the same. They didn't ask questions. They didn't talk about what happened.

Steve reached over Amelia to turn off the light and when it was dark and the bed was warm Amelia felt very tired.

'Goodnight Amelia.'

'Night Steve.'

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**Shocker, right?**

**I know this chapter is 4 times as long, but you kind of have to stay in the mood to appreciate the \*ahum\* bedroom scene.**

## 4. Chapter 4

### Mistakes were made

Did you ever have to do the 'walk of shame'?

The morning after Halloween 1984 was a sunny one. The rays broke through early in the morning and warmed everyone walking outside. It was just after 7 A.M. and most people were just getting ready for their day. Some early birds walked their dogs or went for a run. Most people on the street were the kind of people that had routines and knew exactly who they were going to cross on the street. So you can imagine that some people looked up at a girl walking around in a witch costume.

Amelia had to do her first ever walk of shame on November 1st 1984. She welcomed the heat of the sun, but not the intensity of the light. She was dealing with a major headache. She rubbed her head as she walked down the street. It was still painful to think but now she had to.

*What is that smell? It's so good. Amelia woke up to an unfamiliar but wonderful smell. It was partly a spicy smell like perfume or shampoo mixed with the smell of sweat. Maybe it should stink but it was an unfamiliar scent to wake up with. Then realisation hit Amelia like a brick wall. She shot up in the bed she had fallen asleep in. Her head turned right first, to see an alarm clock in the dark reading 6.15 A.M. Then her head turned left and she forgot how to breathe for a moment.*

*She had sex with Steve Harrington last night. He was really lying there, unbothered by the world. He slept peacefully and Amelia had never seen anything so beautiful before. She wanted to reach out to him and stroke his face and kiss his forehead, but logic told her she couldn't do that. For the first time since the party started last night, she had to think.*

*It was a one night stand. Steve was still with Nancy. They both had been drunk. There was nothing between her and Steve. No romance, no feelings. Just lust. Amelia got tears in her eyes just thinking about it. But she couldn't break down. She needed to get out. There was a possibility his parents were home by now. Amelia got out of bed and realised all she*

*could wear was her party dress. She got back in her costume and heels. She hesitated for a moment at the door, looking back at the boy in the bed. How lucky could any girl be that woke up next to him and could stay until he woke up? She would never know. Because this was a one night stand.*

When Amelia reached the main shopping street of Hawkins she saw a woman just ready to open her shop. Amelia walked over to her and the woman stopped with the key in the door. She looked Amelia up and down. Amelia laughed nervously and rubbed her arm.

'I uhh, am in need of some new clothes,' she said lamely.

The woman gave her another look, clearly understanding what she had been doing last night. Then she opened the door and allowed Amelia in.

'Yeah I'd say so.'

School had never before been so stressful. Amelia had to count the minutes in her first period, aching to meet up with Claire. She wasn't the only person in the school with a hangover. Some kids looked straight-up awful today. Amelia wasn't doing too bad luckily. She had found a good blouse and skirt in the shop to wear for the day and the woman in the shop even helped her to tame her hair and lend some make-up. Amelia looked better today than she had done in all her schooldays. Yet she felt the worst.

Finally first period ended and she could go to Claire. The brunette was waiting at Amelia's locker. When she noticed her friend she walked up to her with a big smile. The girls hugged.

'Amelia! I was starting to wonder whether you really cut your hair. Memories are a bit fuzzy. Anyway, I totally lost you last night. Where did you go?' Claire fired away.

Amelia bit her lip. 'Let's sit down somewhere quietly and I'll tell you everything.'

'You did WHAT?' Claire shouted.

Amelia tried to shush her friend. She looked over her shoulder at the

other people on the square outside. Luckily it wasn't busy and no one was paying attention.

'I sort of...slept with Harrington.'

'Yeah I got that part. Oh my god. I knew that relationship was done for,' Claire said, leaning her head on her hand.

'No, don't you get it? It was a one night stand! He is still with Nancy,' Amelia said. Now that she said it out loud she noticed the sinking feeling in her stomach. Now that she said it she had to believe it. It hurt more than she expected.

Claire huffed. 'Well you clearly didn't see them fighting last night. Looked like the final blow to me. And then Nancy went home with Jonathan and-,'

Amelia held up a hand. 'Hold on, what? I only saw Steve walk away angrily, but you saw them fight? I'll ask about the Jonathan part afterwards.'

'They were arguing over something, couldn't hear what. Then Steve threw a drink over Nancy's shirt. Wonderful since it was white and see-through and everything. The attention whore. So then she was angrily stomping to the bathroom and Steve followed. Didn't see them anymore after that. I was a bit occupied with a sexy sailor. Not important though,' she said as an afterthought. Stories of Claire snogging some boy were almost weekly news so Amelia knew it wasn't important.

'I saw them storming out of the bathroom then. Steve was so upset. I followed him, wanting to help him. Guess I did in some way,' Amelia said. A blush crept on her face.

Claire giggled. 'Oh don't you lie. You helped yourself too.'

Amelia looked away with a smile on her lips. 'So. Jonathan.'

Claire started chipping a piece of wood off the table. 'Oh yeah. Jonathan walked her to his car. The girl seemed too drunk to stand on her feet. Wonder if he did something to her.'

'Jonathan isn't like that,' Amelia defended right away. 'He can be a jerk but he is not a creep.'

'A jerk? Thought you were on good terms with him?' Claire asked, raising an eyebrow.

'Well he said my hair is ugly,' Amelia pouted.

'The bitch,' Claire stated.

A silence fell between the girls. Amelia wondered what Steve was doing right now. Would he even count this night as something special or did he just walk up to his friends saying 'I banged the shy girl' and get high-fives? Amelia couldn't think about it too long because the thoughts were never pleasant. She also imagined Nancy finding out and coming out to bitch-slap her. Amelia figured she deserved that, but she didn't need the entire school to know she slept with Steve.

'So did you see Steve already this morning?' Claire asked after a moment.

Amelia shook her head. 'I don't think I can face him. I'm going straight home after school and I'll keep quiet for a while.'

Claire sighed. 'Keep quiet? Girl that's been your style forever. I thought your new look came with some confidence as well.'

Amelia blushed. 'Well, it does. But this is about self-preservation.'

Claire shook her head. 'Whatever you say. Just promise me something.'

'What?'

'When you walk back into the school don't look at your shoes. Look everyone in the eye that is looking at you. A lot of people will notice you today because you look different. Listen to those whispers and look at their smiles. It will do you good,' Claire said wisely.

Amelia stood up and hugged Claire around her neck. 'Promise. You always know what's best. Thank you.'

'Anytime darling.'

Claire was right. Amelia kept her head high that day and she did enjoy the looks she got. Her new look was working. There was a permanent smile on her face that day and she started to forget how horrible she felt that morning. Things were going her way after all. Maybe she could forget Steve when another guy made his move on her.

Later that day she had to talk to her science partner about an essay. When one of his friends told her he was watching basketball practice her heart sunk. Her luck had run out.

She dragged her feet to the gym and sneaked in without drawing attention. The game was on. It was the team with shirts against the team without. Thank god Steve was wearing a shirt. Amelia stood for a little moment to watch the game. Or really to watch one player. He was too caught up in the game to notice her. The new kid, Billy, was giving Steve a hard time. He was there every time Steve got the ball. Amelia blinked from her concentration and found Patrick on the tribune.

'Hey Patrick,' she greeted as she set her bag down next to him.

'Hey Amelia,' he said without looking up from the game. When he did look at her he did a double take. 'Amelia! You look so different.'

Amelia smiled. 'Good different?'

Patrick looked her over with greedy eyes. 'Definitely.'

Amelia chuckled. 'Thanks. I wanted to ask you about our science essay. I thought we could start by splitting up the chapters and then reviewing each other.'

Patrick got a notebook from his bag. 'Already started. I did the first two chapters, you can start on five. I would love to review work afterwards. You can take these notes if you like.'

Amelia smiled at him. Patrick was one of those rare people that actually realised how important studying was. He wanted to become a doctor so he pushed himself to the limits. Amelia liked Patrick.

'You are amazing Patrick.'

'Steve?'

Patrick, Amelia and most people on the tribune looked up to see Nancy Wheeler standing on the side-line of the field. Amelia felt her heart speed up. She needed to stay cool or she would attract the attention of Steve. She also didn't want to show Patrick her panic. She tried to breathe.

Steve stepped out of the game. He got a towel and drank some water before he followed Nancy outside. Billy made a rude remark on their way out.

'Trouble in paradise,' Patrick said.

'You think so?' Amelia asked. She hoped she sounded mildly interested.

'Yeah. Some people say they broke up last night,' Patrick said.

Amelia stayed perfectly still. 'A lot of people seem to find them interesting to gossip about.'

Patrick chuckled. 'Well yeah. Harrington has always been one of those attention seekers. Nancy is just dragged into it.'

Amelia knew that wasn't true. Yes, Steve *had been* an attention seeker, but he had changed. Changed for Nancy because that is not the kind of boyfriend she wanted. Most people seemed to sympathise more with Nancy than Steve. And that was not a good thing for Amelia.

After she had talked everything through with Patrick it was time for Amelia to go home. She wasn't keen on staying longer than needed. After she had retrieved her stuff from her locker she hurried towards the door. She wasn't looking where she was going when she rounded a corner and walked into someone.

'Oh shit, sorry,' she said quickly.

'No, I'm sorry. I zoned out.'

Amelia looked down at the boy she had crashed into. It took her a moment to realise who it was.

'Hey, you're Byers right? Will Byers?' she asked.

Will looked down at the floor. 'Yeah. The zombie-boy,' he said with a small voice.

Amelia felt a rush of pity go through her. She had heard people using that word but now she saw the effect it had on this boy. He looked like he started to believe he was a zombie.

'Oh I wouldn't know. I know your brother, Jonathan.'

Will looked up at her. Just the fact that someone was talking to him and not called him zombie-boy right away was enough to make him smile. 'Oh right. He might have mentioned you. You are...'

Amelia stuck out her hand to shake. 'Amelia Thompson. Wouldn't know if he mentioned me. I'm kind of a wallflower. Or well, used to be,' she said with a smile. Will smiled back and shook her hand. Amelia looked around, searching the other boys he always hang out with.

'Where are your friends?' Amelia asked simply. Will looked past her in the hallway. 'They walked on. I think they haven't noticed yet I'm gone.'

And she thought she was having a rough day. 'Oh.'

A silence fell but she needed to say something to lift the spirits of Will. He looked tired. Someone his age shouldn't look tired.

'So I saw your costumes yesterday. I love Ghostbusters,' she tried.

Will smiled half-hearted. 'Yeah, they're cool. We just didn't know nobody was going to dress up.'

Amelia shrugged. 'Oh well, I think it is cool to be different from the rest. And anyway, you weren't alone. You are strong as a team.'

Will smiled and nodded but had nothing to add. Amelia looked down



at him. 'I envy the friendship you have. A tight group of friends that are there for each other. I have one friend like that. She is great, but some more friends wouldn't hurt you know.'

Will looked up at her. Amelia had succeeded. She gave Will something to feel superior about. She could see a bit of a spark in his eyes. A flicker of hope.

'Yeah I'm lucky to have them,' he said.

Amelia stepped around him. 'Well, wouldn't want to keep you from them any longer. Have a nice day Will.'

Will smiled up at her. 'Thanks. You too Amelia.'

She took a second longer to watch Will when she noticed someone on the far end of the hallway. It was Steve. And he looked upset. Amelia should go up to him to see if he wanted to talk. But right now she was a coward. She smiled nervously at Will as a last goodbye and turned on her heels to head out of the school.

## 5. Chapter 5

### Control

Amelia was happy to go home that day. Despite the compliments she felt horrible. She had possibly broken up a relationship she had nothing to do with. She had never actually heard Steve saying his relationship was on the rocks. She assumed it was because Claire said so. That was mistake one. Talking to Steve was fine, but flirting with Steve was not.

Her other mistake is assuming things about Nancy. She didn't know the first thing about that girl yet she claimed to dislike her. Just because she was Steve's girlfriend? That was shallow. Amelia realised at the end of the day she had never given Nancy a chance. Maybe she was bitter because Nancy had never been nice to *her*. Everyone said Nancy was nice but she had never made an effort towards Amelia. Maybe that stung.

To top her mistakes on Halloween, she had made an even worse mistake today. She had deliberately walked away when she saw Steve in the hall. There weren't a lot of people in that hall. She could have walked up to him, saying she knew an empty classroom and talked things through. Maybe if she had done that she wouldn't have that horrible feeling right now. Guilt. That's what it was. Amelia had never before done anything she felt so guilty about. All the compliments in the hall turned to ash at the thought of what that new look had accomplished.

Yet she shouldn't *blame* it on the new look. It was something positive. It was progress and confidence. She was happy with her new look and she wouldn't change it back even if she could. Her hair was cute and her clothes made her feel like a real girl.

Amelia drove home slowly. Her head was so distracted by the guilty feeling and the flashbacks to last night that she wasn't paying attention to driving. Every time she told herself to focus on traffic there was something to distract her too. Like the fact she was driving on the same road as last night...when Steve took her home....

Suddenly there was a flash of something and a scream. Amelia hit the brakes hard. A mother was crossing the road with her son. They stood in front of her car, a short distance from her grill.

'Watch it!' the mother yelled angrily. Then she dragged her son quickly to the sidewalk. Amelia received one more angry glare and she tried to say sorry with her hand. When the mother was gone Amelia felt a new rush of guilt mix with the already existing one. *Great. Next to betrayal, being a slut and a coward she was also nearly a child murderer. Best freaking Halloween ever.*

She took a deep breath and continued driving. This time her heart was beating fast and her eyes couldn't be wider open as she checked every trashcan and sign on the pavement, afraid some kid would jump out.

By some miracle she made it home. Her plans were to lock herself in her room and overthink every word she had said that day. She would hate herself until she would come up with a plan or just wither in guilt forever.

Amelia stepped out of her car and made her way over to the front door. She was so distracted by her thoughts that she didn't notice her father walking up. Scott Thompson was holding a decayed lettuce in one hand and poked in it with the other. He did notice his daughter but didn't look at her.

'Amelia! Good you are home. There is this weird thing going on with the harvest. Everything just died overnight and I have no clue...'

Amelia stopped in her tracks when her father started talking. She was so tired that she forgot why he had stopped his sentence when he looked at her. His eyes grew wide and his mouth fell open. The lettuce dropped to the ground, forgotten.

'What in the name of God have you done to your hair?'

'Ohh. That.'

There was a moment of silence when Amelia realised she was in trouble. Her father's face contorted from surprise to anger.

'Why Amelia? Why did you make such a stupid mistake?' He asked. He was talking through his teeth.

Amelia started to get angry too. 'It isn't a mistake. It did it on purpose and I am happy with it. Everyone says it looks good!'

Scott walked up closely to his daughter to tower over her. 'It looks stupid! You look like a boy!'

Amelia stared her father down. Any other day she might agree and accept the punishment. But today she had dealt with enough.

'It does not! It is my hair and my choice!'

Amelia stormed to the front door. She was so blind with rage that she drew on her magic to slam the door open. She continued on in the living room where she found her mother. She had been reading a newspaper when she looked up.

'Amelia, what is-,'

'WHAT DID YOU JUST DO?' Scott yelled through the hallway.

Amelia turned around to face her father when he walked in. His head was red and purple. His hands were balled in fists. Amelia had never seen her father this angry before.

'Scott! What happened? Amelia, where is your hair?' Amelia's mother asked in confusion.

Amelia turned to her mother. 'This man over here doesn't want me to grow up. Or do magic. Or do *anything*! He hates everything that is different from his boring daily life and blames me when it happens!'

'You are going way too far young lady!' Scott yelled back. Normally he was so careful to keep his voice down. Because reputation was everything and that one nosy neighbour *might* just pass by the house. So clearly her father was so angry that nothing mattered anymore.

Hestia, always being the calm one, tried to shush both troublemakers. 'Now, why don't we sit down and talk this through? I'm sure we can come to an agreement.'

Her mother walked to her father's side and placed her hand soothingly on his elbow. Amelia was done with pretending.

'Don't you get it mum? We will never come to an agreement. Dad has hated me from the day I was born! He prayed the Lord to give him a normal child, but I'm not! I am a witch! Just like the woman he married! But having to raise a kid that was a weirdo too was too much for him. We can't come to an agreement because the only thing he wants is for me to be a fucking muggle! And I can't change who I am!'

There was a painful silence after that. Scott didn't react shocked. He seemed to agree with Amelia. And that was the most enraging and painful thing Amelia had ever experienced. She was right.

Her mother however still believed that wasn't true.

'Amelia! You take that back!' She said crossly.

Amelia just stared at her father. Their silence was enough for each other to understand. Maybe this was the moment in which Amelia walked away from home and went on a search to a wizard or witch that would help her. It would fit right in her pattern of the day: walking away from confrontations.

'Amelia you have to calm down. Please, you make the walls shake,' her mother said a lot softer.

She hadn't even realised what she was causing. The walls were shaking. The table was almost dancing as her mother's coffee spilled over the newspaper. The framed pictures above the fireplace fell over the edge and crashed to the ground. She could hear porcelain crashing in the kitchen. But none of that encouraged her to calm down. She was angry and she wasn't done talking.

'I need a school like Ilvermorny to teach me how to control all this. Math and history isn't going to help me! I NEED HELP!'

Amelia yelled so loudly that a wave of energy left her and hit both her parents. They stumbled backwards but her mother was quickly back on her feet. She withdrew something from her pocket.

Something Amelia hadn't seen in years. She thought her mother had broken it long ago. But there it was. Hestia murmured a single word and sparks burst from the tip of her wand.

There were exactly two seconds to react. Amelia threw up her arm and managed to shield herself from her mother's magic. But instead of shielding, she was firing the spell back to her mother. Combined with the sheer power of Amelia the spell hit Hestia square in the chest and she flew backwards into the wall.

Everything went silent. Hestia wasn't moving. She laid awkwardly on the ground with her arms and legs at odd angles. The shaking had stopped and nothing was crashing anymore. Most things were on the ground anyway after that last rush of energy.

'Mom?'

Amelia had a dry throat and wet eyes. She waited a long moment, just standing there. She looked down at her own hands. *Oh my god what have I done?* The thought played on loop in her head. Then she dived down to cradle her mother in her hands. She checked her pulse. For a full second she was afraid she wasn't going to feel anything. But then there it was. A pulse.

'She's breathing,' Amelia whispered. She was crying. Big streams of tears ran over her cheeks. Amelia checked her mother for wounds but couldn't find anything. She tried to recall what her mother had said. When she knew what spell she was going to use on her daughter, Amelia might have an idea what was wrong with her.

It took Scott a moment longer to get back on his feet. He was thrown back too, but he had no injury. He stared down at his wife and daughter for a long moment before he walked to the phone.

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**I got my first reviews. Yay!**

## 6. Chapter 6

### Don't even bother

It had been a long and horrible day. If only it could end quickly. But Steve Harrington wasn't done. He still had something really important to do. And he wanted to do it before the day was over.

He hadn't been in this street for a very long time. About two years ago he dated a girl that lived in this street, but that family had moved out of Hawkins. He didn't have trouble to find the house though. He knew it was a farmhouse and there were only three in this street.

Steve was mentally preparing his conversation with the girl he spend Halloween night with. It wasn't easy to get your life back on tracks after you made some huge mistakes. Yet that wasn't the worst thing about this day.

*'Jeez you really can't handle your alcohol. Ah, okay you remember going to Tina's party last light?'*

*'Yes.'*

*'Okay and then what?'*

*'I remember dancing and spilling some punch. You got mad at me because I was drunk and then you took me home.'*

*'No see that is where your mind gets a little bit fuzzy. That was your other boyfriend, Jonathan.'*

*'I don't understand.'*

*'Pretty simple Nancy I'm just telling it like it is.'*

*'What?'*

*'So apparently we killed Barb, I don't care cause I'm bullshit. And our whole relationship is bullshit, and pretty much everything is just bullshit, bullshit, bullshit. Oh yeah also, you don't love me.'* Steve ticked the many 'bullshits' off his fingers. He was angry with Nancy. She had been a total

*nightmare at the party, she had blamed him for everything and best guy in the universe Jonathan Byers took her home.*

*Yes, Steve was aware he had slept with another girl that night and that he was wrong to do so. But that was the difference. Steve was sorry. Nancy wasn't. And to pretend you don't remember anything is just a cheap trick. You always remember bits and pieces. Nancy didn't look like she had that big of a hangover anyway.*

*'I was drunk Steve! I don't remember any of that,' she defended. There it was. Cheap trick. Steve laughed nervously.*

*'So what? That just makes everything you said just bullshit too?'*

*'Yes!'*

*'Then tell me.' Steve was throwing everything on the line here. But he had too.*

*'Tell you what?'*

*He took a hesitant breath. It was going to crush him and he knew it. But to continue this play would be lying to himself.*

*'Do you love me?'*

*She didn't. She didn't say so, because Tommy pulled Steve back inside to finish the game they lost to that annoying piece of shit Hargrove. But she didn't have to say it. It was clear in her eyes. She couldn't straight up yell 'Yes!' so then it wasn't real.*

*The worst part was, that he *did* still love her. He would still do everything to get her back. Wasn't that pathetic.*

*But then there was this other girl, Amelia. Such a mysterious girl. All her life she was a wallflower. Someone who lived in the shadow of others and didn't try to get noticed. Steve had done an assignment with her in their freshmen year. Unfortunately back then he was a total douchebag, trying to win the crown to popularity. He had been mean to her and she hated him. Back then he didn't care. But in the four years in-between Steve had developed a habit of checking Amelia out. Just to see what her life was like. From a distance. And*



then one day she looked like a freaking goddess. She had ditched her overgrown hair and wore something that showed skin and curves. Steve was straight up mesmerized by the girl.

He knew that sleeping with her was a mistake. If that was the base of any relationship they were going to have, it was a poor one. He wondered how Amelia saw that night. He knew she was tipsy, but she wouldn't have come if she didn't want to. Steve had a hard time deciding which girl was worth the effort. Because at this moment both stood very far away from him.

When Steve pulled into the drive of the Thompson home he hadn't been prepared for what he would find. First thing he noticed was a single lettuce rotting away on the ground. When he walked over to the door and rang the doorbell nobody answered. He peered in through the window and felt himself go cold.

The room was trashed. Everything lay in pieces on the ground. The chairs were thrown in one corner and the telephone hang on its wire. This wasn't good.

There is nothing worse than waiting. Endless waiting with no sign of an end. Just hoping that it would come quick, but knowing it wouldn't.

Amelia sat next to her mother's hospital bed. A monitor was bleeping out her heartbeat. There was an uncomfortable smell in the room. Some people were laughing too loudly in the yard under the window. Amelia's eyes were fixed on her mother's face. It wasn't moving. It was peaceful and still. But Amelia would rather have awake and furious.

A coma. That's what the doctor said. Her father had given a fairly believable story about Hestia tripping and falling. It was possible to hit your head just wrongly to fall into a coma. Yet the doctor seemed suspicious when he couldn't find any wound.

Amelia was happy her father had taken his distance. For now he allowed Amelia to stay in the room. He had come in once, saying something about going home to pick up stuff. Amelia hadn't listened. Hadn't indicated she knew he was there. She didn't care. She was still

angry. But anger had brought her mother in this mess. Amelia didn't allow herself to be angry anymore. She didn't allow herself to feel anything else except that crushing sense of dread, sadness and guilt.

Maybe her father was right. Maybe she shouldn't have magic. If there was a way to get rid of it, she would do it. No moment of doubt was in her head. She despised what she was. She wondered, just like her father did, why she was still walking the earth.

After two solid hours of staring at her mother and sometimes muttering apologies, Amelia stood up to get herself a cup of coffee. She dragged her feet through the hallway. She felt heavy. Like there was a huge weight dragging along with her. It encouraged her to fall down to the ground and just lie there, hoping nobody would see her.

The machine handed Amelia her coffee. She took the cup with shaking hands. Once more tears were starting to form in her eyes. She sniffed them away, telling herself she could cry again in her mother's room.

'Oh thank god I found you.'

Did you ever have a scenario where you could picture the last person on planet earth you wanted to walk in the room, did actually walk in the room?

The machine had made so much noise that Amelia hadn't noticed the heavy panting of the person standing in the doorway of the waiting room. Reluctantly she turned around to face Steve. She saw the shock in his eyes as he noticed her red eyes, dishevelled clothes and shaking hands.

'Amelia. Are you okay?' he asked, his eyes full with concern.

Amelia took a deep breath before she answered. 'No. I am pretty far from okay Steve.'

He seemed at a loss for words. He slowly walked up to Amelia. Her hands were trembling so badly that coffee was almost spilling over. He took her smaller hands in his big ones and looked her in the eye.

'What happened?'

'A lot. I don't want to talk about it.'

'But...did you get hurt?'

Amelia sighed. 'No. Not me. Steve, I really can't use company right now. Most of all, I can't talk to you right now. I am sorry about everything, but please just leave me alone.'

Steve stared at her, but Amelia faced the ground. A fresh tear rolled over her cheek. Steve reached to wipe it away with his finger but Amelia took a step back, withdrawing her hands too in the process.

'Please.' The word was a broken whisper.

'Amelia you don't look like being alone is the best thing right now. If you don't want to talk that's fine. But just let me be here for you. I want to help you,' Steve pleaded.

Amelia pushed past him through the door. She made her way back to her mother. She heard hurried footsteps follow her. Soon enough he caught up. 'Amelia.'

'You can't help Steve. Go home.'

He took two long strides ahead and ended up in her path. She just looked down at the floor.

'Just tell me what happened,' Steve pleaded.

A nurse walked by in the hallway. She was giving the two an odd look. Amelia could stop her and tell her to remove Steve from the hospital. She could hide in the toilet until he was gone. She could tell him ten more times to leave.

But maybe he was right. Maybe she shouldn't be alone.

She raised her head slowly and looked at Steve. Her eyes lacked the fire she had the night before. They lacked every will to do something.

'My mother is in a coma and I put her there.'

Saying it out loud chilled her to the bone. The tears came again.

Steve was nailed to the ground. Of all things she could say this was the last he expected. It was worse than what he had dared to believe. You could comfort someone that was in pain. But you couldn't comfort someone that put someone they loved in pain. That kind of pain was bone-deep and permanent.

Amelia waited for a response but she didn't get one. Steve was completely frozen. She lowered her gaze again and started to walk around him. But he held out a hand to grab her shoulder. He couldn't face her this time.

'I don't think there is anything I could say to make this better,' he admitted.

'No.'

Steve turned around and stood next to her in the hallway. 'But I can be there so you aren't alone. Would you be okay with that?'

Amelia had already made up her mind. She nodded weakly.

'Please.'

Amelia sat once more next to her mother in the hospital room. There was no development. No sign of hope. Yet Amelia felt a little bit better, because Steve was sitting in the chair next to her. They hadn't spoken yet and the silence felt surprisingly comfortable. They should talk things through. Amelia should apologize and ask how he was doing. But both of them felt it wasn't the right moment for that. Right now they were just going to sit there. Amelia wanted to be there for her mother and Steve wanted to be there for Amelia.

A nurse had walked in a couple of times. She asked every time how long they planned on staying. It was getting very late and they should go home. Amelia hadn't even responded when the nurse was in the room. It was Steve who used a charming smile to ask the nurse for a little longer. And when she left they returned to that silence. Amelia was watching her mother and couldn't see Steve that way. She felt his presence and heard his breath and that was enough. However she was curious what Steve was looking at and what he was thinking about.

Steve mostly stared at the back of Amelia's head. He was thinking about the Halloween party and everything that happened afterwards. He was wondering if his mistake was maybe good for something. What if he gave Amelia exactly what she needed? What if they didn't have sex and he would still be here in this room? He figured they couldn't have this comfortable silence between them if there was the same tension as before. He wanted to ask her a million questions and tell her a thousand things, but he remained silent. Because that was what she needed in that moment.

He still wondered what had happened to put Misses Thompson in this bed. Amelia had said it was her fault. Steve didn't doubt it for a second. Amelia's eyes looked so hurt when she looked at him. She looked so tired and broken. But what had happened in that house? There had been a struggle, maybe a fight. Something between Amelia and her mother. Whatever happened, Steve knew Amelia was sorry for it.

The nurse walked in for the fifth time. This time she placed her hands on her hips and stared them down.

'It's time to go,' she stated.

Steve nodded and got out of his chair. His muscles were stiff from sitting in the same position for so long. He flexed his legs and arms and put on his coat. Amelia hadn't moved. Steve placed his hand gently on her shoulder. Amelia shuddered for a moment, as if woken from a trance.

'Are you coming?' he asked calmly.

Amelia looked at Steve for the first time since they entered that room. She locked eyes with him for a moment before she looked at the nurse.

'Can I stay?'

Her voice was broken. It sounded like she wasn't used to talking anymore. The nurse seemed to sympathise with her.

'Alright. I'll bring you a blanket and you can sleep on the couch,' she

said and pointed to a couch in the corner of the room. Amelia nodded, as close to a thank you as she was going to get.

'Well I'll go home,' Steve announced. 'Are you going to be okay?'

Amelia looked back at him and did something unexpected. She smiled. Just a little smile, but it was the most wonderful thing Steve had seen all day.

'Yeah. Eventually.'

Steve pulled the small girl in for a hug. His long arms circled her body, protecting her from the world. She placed her arms around his waist. The little bit of pressure on his back where her hands rested felt amazing. Steve placed his cheek against her hair and breathed in her scent for a moment.

'Call me if you need me,' he whispered.

'I will,' Amelia answered.

Then the hug was over and suddenly the air felt chillier as their goodbye was drawing to a close. Steve felt terrible about leaving her in this state, but she looked like she needed some sleep.

With a last awkward wave Steve left the room. Amelia crashed down on the couch and fell asleep before the nurse had returned with a blanket.

## 7. Chapter 7

### The killing curse

The next three days nothing happened in the life of Amelia Thompson. After the first night the doctor had forbidden her to sleep in the hospital again. That night she had to go home. The entire way home she dreaded seeing her father. Yet when she returned home he wasn't there. She suspected he was in the barn or on the field. That night he didn't return either. Amelia was glad to have the house to herself. She had cleaned the living room up. All the glass was disposed and she had even replaced the frames with new ones.

There was probably a way to fix it with magic. There was a way to do everything quicker, cleaner and cheaper. But the thought didn't even cross her mind. Somehow her mother's wand had ended up in a box above the fireplace. Amelia glanced at it from time to time. She was angry with the wand. The wand had done this. It was easy to blame an object for her own mistake.

That night she cried herself to sleep.

The next morning her dad was still gone. Amelia didn't care. She made breakfast and fed the sheep and goats. Then she left for the hospital again. Nothing had changed and the day was mostly the same. The only break in her routine was a visit from Claire. The girl cried openly in Amelia's arms, saying she was so sorry for Misses Thompson. She ensured Amelia she would be alright but she sounded less convinced than Amelia herself.

That night her dad was still gone. It was nice and quiet in the house and Amelia appreciated it. She hadn't paid attention to the missing alcohol bottles or the fresh smell of tobacco. Her father had been there during the day, but Amelia didn't notice. On this day she was once again staring at the wand on top of the fireplace.

What if she used it? Could she fix her mother? Would there be a healing spell in that old spell book she had seen many years ago? Maybe there was a spell, but Amelia doubted she was able to carry it out correctly. She had never used a wand in her life. The only things

she had done so far was destroying things when she was angry. She had never created anything beautiful. She had never made things float like Luke Skywalker did with the Force. That would be cool. That would be something to practice and not feel bad about. But that was also what her dad had forbidden.

That night her thoughts returned to Steve Harrington. For the first time she thought their encounter in the hospital over. She had been so tired and sad that back when it happened she couldn't think about what it meant. Steve was in the hospital because he wanted to see if she was okay. He probably came up to their house to talk. Talk about the things she should have talked about when she saw him in the hallway behind Will Byers. And when Steve arrived at her house he found it empty. He had asked a neighbour and curious Miss Wilson would have gladly told him that the odd family had been fighting and drove off to the hospital with a big hurry. She imaged the look on his face when he expected Amelia to be hurt. She imaged the stress he had when he drove to the hospital. She could also image the relief he felt when she was getting that terrible cup of coffee late in the evening. She hadn't wanted to see Steve, but he must have been so happy and relieved to see her.

Steve had sat there in the room, not saying a word, for hours. Claire couldn't remain silent for five minutes without asking something or trying to cheer her friend up. Amelia appreciated the thought, but it was so annoying. Steve had done exactly what Amelia had needed. He could read her. Amelia wondered how it was possible to feel so connected to someone when you didn't really know that person. Steve seemed to know her far beyond what she imaged. She pretended she knew Steve because she had been drooling over him for a year. From a distance.

And then there was that hug. The hug he gave Amelia that told her it *was* going to be fine. It had been the only moment since the accident that she actually believed it would be fine. That her mother would wake up and ask her everything about that cute boy that kept coming over. But seriously....that hug. It had felt more real, more special and much more warm than the sex had felt.

The sex was an intoxicated mistake they had both made. They had the wrong feeling about each other that night and they made



conclusions based on how attractive they looked that evening. Amelia admitted that the sunglasses were always a major plus on Steve. She regretted their night so much now. Because what could that hug even mean after you had done something so stupid and reckless? And now she had lost her virginity on her first serious drunken night. Great story to tell the kids.

The next day her father still wasn't home. Amelia started to feel less angry with him. In the end it was her fault, so what right did she have to be mad? She gathered her courage and wrote a letter to her dad for when he returned home. She apologized for everything she had said and done and hoped they could restore what broken relationship they had left. She left the letter on the dinner table and left for the hospital again.

On her way there she noticed something. When she drove through the streets she saw Steve's car parked in an odd place. It was next to a path leading into the forest. There was an old train track running back there. It wasn't a popular place for runners or strollers because there were a lot of sudden holes in the ground. Amelia looked down the street and wondered if she knew who lived in the houses nearby. The only one she could remember was dear Miss Henderson, that lovely lady with the cat that often ended up in their garden. Miss Henderson was one of those rare cases of suburban housewives that Amelia actually liked. *And so did her mother.* She shook the thought from her mind and continued to the hospital.

It was once again very late when Amelia got home. She prepared some food and ate by herself at the dinner table. The fact that her letter had disappeared didn't slip her notice. She wondered where he was. If he had read it and wanted to accept her apology he ought to be here. Amelia tried not to think about it.

After dinner she brought her plate to the kitchen and started cleaning it. Slowly the idea that her mother wasn't going to return soon started to sink in deeper and deeper. She had to throw food away that had hit the expiration date. She had to clean all the dishes and not just leave it on the counter. She had to take out the trash and buy groceries. A tear slipped over her cheek before she realised it. The silence in the house was suddenly crushing.

But then the silence was broken. Amelia's head snapped up to the window looking out over the barn. She had heard a noise she had never heard before. It sounded like an animal, but nothing like a sheep. Slowly the girl crept to the glass and opened the window a little. She waited, afraid to even breathe. Then there was a new sound. It was the scream of a sheep. It sounded panicked and possibly hurt. The bleating was so loud and poignant. Amelia felt her heartbeat quicken. She needed to see what was going on. But she was scared. Then the screaming stopped and it was silent again.

Amelia took a deep breath and decided to go. She took a flashlight and the keys. After a moment's thought she got her father's gun too. She was already in the hallway to the door when she stopped. It felt like something was calling her. She knew what it was. She knew she should probably listen. Her head turned slowly. It was her best shot at survival when it was necessary. Amelia walked into the living room and took her mother's wand in her hand. Sure enough some sparks lit up at the tip, connecting with Amelia's magic. It felt good and wrong at the same time. Like putting a key in a lock but then finding out it doesn't quite fit. But it was good enough for now.

Amelia crept through the garden to the entrance of the barn. It was pretty cold outside. There was a layer of fog hanging over the grass. She cursed herself for not wearing anything warmer. Brilliant as she was, she had taken one of her new outfits today. She wore a black high-fitted skirt and a matching navy blouse. She looked good in it, but her legs were turning blue from the cold.

The cold wasn't however the only reason she had goose bumps all over her body. The eerie scenery with the fog and the terrible bleating was enough to let anyone experience fear. Amelia kept repeating *It's gonna be fine, It's gonna be fine* in her head.

Her hand found the door and she pushed it open. With a flashlight in her one hand and the loaded gun in the other she crept inside the barn. The wand was tucked in the waistband of her skirt for now. It was dark inside the barn. The moon was covered behind clouds and the only light came from a small peer in the far corner and the flashlight she was holding. Amelia could see her own breath come out in fearful small puffs. She took a moment to get adjusted to the darkness. The sounds in the barn were mostly normal. Shuffling of

the animals and the wind outside. But there was another sound. A sound that she wished she wasn't hearing because it meant she had to continue in the barn. The odd sound was a muffled fleshy sound. Amelia swallowed.

She took her first step forward. Her eyes started to see the outline of the stalls and the animals. No sheep was asleep. They were all walking around restlessly. Yet they remained silent. Amelia had learned it was a basic instinct: the sheep thought that they wouldn't get noticed if they remain silent. It didn't make Amelia feel better. Another step forward. She could locate the stall where the sound came from. Another step. A new smell hit her nose with real force. Blood. *This is getting better and better.*

Finally Amelia reached the stall. What she saw was way beyond what she had imaged to find. It was more horribly inhuman than she had thought. It wasn't animalistic either. More somewhere in between. The creature was hunched over a dead sheep, eating the guts out. The body of the sheep moved sickly when the creature dove into the flesh. The creature itself had skin that had the colour of a lizard, but the structure of human skin. But a lot...more gross.

The creature noticed the light being turned on him. It turned around to look at Amelia. Or she supposed it did, because it didn't have eyes. Just one huge gaping hole for a mouth with pedal-like flaps around it. Amelia seriously felt sick. She would surely throw up if she could afford to look away. But the creature was focussing on her now and it started to creep towards her. Amelia backed away out of the stall. Once the creature was clear of the sheep she fired the gun.

The sound was loud like thunder and the drawback hurt her wrist. The sheep all panicked at once, forgetting their silence. Amelia looked in horror at the creature that was still advancing on her like nothing had happened. If she wasn't scared before, she definitely was now. She fired the gun again. The sheep were so wild they nearly jumped over their stalls. The creature opened its mouth to make an alien sound that meant nothing good. Now that the mouth was opened she hoped to kill it by firing in his throat. The next shot was aimed perfectly in the middle of the mouth, but he still didn't die.

*The gun doesn't work!* It took her a moment to let the gun go. She

threw the weapon at the monster, hoping it would knock him out. Still it didn't bother him. He was only angered. He looked like he was about to jump on her. When she was beneath those sharp claws and horrible mouth she knew it was over.

One last chance.

She dropped the flashlight and got her mother's wand out. She stood there awkwardly, holding out the little wooden stick, as if hoping the monster would be scared by it. Obviously it wasn't and his following roar indicated he was about to pound on her.

*Think! Think! What spells do you know? Something for stunning? Something for setting things on fire?*

Amelia was too late. The creature jumped and threw the girl over. She lay pinned beneath his body. The wand was still in her hand but her mind didn't have time to think of a spell. Her mind was blank. The mouth opened and Amelia looked up to a million tiny teeth lined up around the opening. A horrible smell of blood and decay came from it. Bits of slime and saliva flew out of the mouth when it roared. Then it lifted one of its paws to slash down at her.

Survival instinct kicked in and Amelia kicked her knee in the stomach as hard as she could. It seemed to pain him enough to stop his advance and Amelia used this to throw the other paw off her. She crawled on elbows and heels away from the creature. She had seconds. She needed a spell.

*'I can teach you a million different spells honey. They do good things and bad things.'*

A million and yet nothing came to mind. Then another memory hit her.

*There is just three spells you may never use. They are unforgivable.*

A million spells and what came to mind were the forbidden ones.

*There is a spell for killing. It makes you a murderer. My dear Amelia, I will tell you the spell but you can never ever use it.*

Never ever.

The monster lunged for her. The mouth was coming straight for her face.

*'Avada Kadavra!'*

She must have passed out. She must have died. Everything was black for too long. The first thing she noticed was her breath. Then came the sound of the panicked sheep that slowly started to calm down. Then the smell of blood. Then her eyes opened. She was still alive. She was laying on her back in the middle of the barn. She sat up and noticed the hump of flesh laying on top of her legs. It was the monster.

Amelia had the most childish reaction to seeing this. 'Iew! Iew! Get it off me GET IT OFF ME!' she screamed in a high-pitched voice. She pushed the lifeless flesh off her and got to her feet. A new shock of pain went through her body. One ankle was badly bruised. The creature had stood on it when it had her pinned to the ground. Amelia withheld herself from cursing and just looked down at the dead body.

*Unforgivable.* Amelia didn't yet realise what this meant. She didn't yet realise she had just killed for the first time. What she did feel was a surge of adrenaline and a weird form of joy. She was alive. That was a reason to be happy, right? Amelia let out an airy laugh but started crying at the same time.

She looked around her at the sheep. They seemed to notice the danger was over. She looked over at the dead sheep one last time and threw a thick blanket over it. Then she dragged the monster to the back of the barn. Just to be sure, she tied the creature up. Somehow she was still not sure it was dead. It hadn't died at gunfire.

After throwing up for ten minutes straight Amelia returned to her house. The last thing she needed right now was to be alone. What if there were more of those things? But who to call? She had no clue where her father was. Her mother was still in a coma. Claire would only freak out. Suddenly it hit her.

*Call me if you need me.*

*I will.*

It was a quick way to the phonebook and to the house number.

*'Harrington,'* said a male voice.

*'Hello Mister Harrington. This is Amelia Thompson. Is Steve home?'* she asked, hoping her voice was steady.

*'Steve? Haven't seen him all day. Honey, where is our son?'* he asked his wife.

*'No clue darling. He has been gone since yesterday. Maybe with Nancy?'*

*'You should try the Wheelers,'* Steve's father said. He didn't seem bother in the slightest bit that his son had been gone for two days.

*'Okay, thank you.'*

Amelia hung up before he could ask more. Steve wasn't with Nancy. She had seen his car in that odd place. It was a long reach, but she tried Miss Henderson.

*'Henderson home!'* Miss Henderson said cheerfully.

*'Hi Miss Henderson, this is Amelia Thompson. I have a weird question. Did you notice a car parked next to your house today?'*

*'Oh hello Amelia! Nice to hear from you again. You should come over for a cup of tea some time. Uhm, a car? Oh I wouldn't know. I've had such a long day. My dear Mews has walked away and I can't find him.'*

Amelia pinched her eyebrows. *'I'm so sorry to hear that. I was asking about the car because it belongs to Steve Harrington and I am looking for him. You don't happen to know where he is, do you?'*

*'Ah the Harrington kid. Well, weird coincidence is that I did see him today. He was driving my son around earlier. You know, little Dusty. I believe they went to his friends home.'*

Now they were getting somewhere. 'Which friend?'

*'Byers. Will Byers.'*

*Thank god.* She was getting somewhere. 'Alright, thank you so much. We'll do that tea later!'

Third phone call.

*'Hello?'* A male voice asked. Amelia couldn't place this voice in the Byers house.

*'Hi, this is Amelia Thompson. I have a weird question: Is Steve Harrington there?'*

There was a moment of silence. Amelia could hear voices in the background. Then there was some cracking sound before someone else spoke.

*'Hello?'* was the answer again, but this time it was Steve.

*'Steve! Thank god I found you!'*

*'Amelia? How did you- Why are you calling so la- Is everything alright?'*

Amelia laughed in the receiver. 'Not really. I had a weird night. C-can I come over?'

A moment of silence. *'I'm sorry, but it is too dangerous. There is a... situation.'*

Suddenly Amelia wasn't scared for herself anymore. She was scared for Steve and whoever was in that house.

'Does it have something to do with a monster without a face?' she said with a deadbeat voice.

*'What?! Don't tell me you saw a Demodog!'*

*'Demodog? What? Who are you talking to Steve?'* said another voice.

*'Shut up Dustin. Amelia, please tell me you are safe.'*

Amelia hadn't expected him to be so worried, but she was also worried about him. Suddenly the distance between them was crushing.

'I'm safe. I killed it.'

'You *WHAT?*'

'Steve, I'm coming to you. I might be able to protect you. Please stay at the Byers house and I'll be there as soon as possible.'

*'No, no I can't let you do that. This is the most unsafe place to be right now.'*

'Yet you are there.'

'Amelia...'

'No Steve. This isn't about *letting* me do anything. I am a weapon and I am going to help you. I'm coming.'

A deep sigh could be heard over the phone. *'Fine. Please be careful. Nowhere is safe.'*

'I will. You be careful too.'

*'Yeah. See you soon.'*

'Real soon.'

Amelia hung up. It was time to face fears and help friends.

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**Good news: I just completed writing this story. So don't worry about being left in the cold on a cliffhanger.**



## 8. Chapter 8

### The Byers home

Amelia practically ran out the front door towards her car. Nowhere was safe. But somehow outside felt less safe than inside. The car would suffice a fake sense of safety for now. She sped away through the streets of Hawkins. The horrible scenario of the barn kept playing in her head, but most of all that curse she had used. When she arrived at the Byers home and they were under attack she probably had to use it again. Could she do that?

As her wheels sped over the asphalt Amelia dug in her memories to find useful spells. She was pretty sure there was one called *reducto* that did a lot of damage. She would try it on one of those monsters later. Trying to remember spells also helped as therapy to keep her mind from more disturbing thoughts. Like when she arrived at the Byers home and she found a bunch of corpses and the...demodog eating away at them like it did with the sheep.

After what felt like an eternity Amelia arrived at the house. She had been here long ago when she and Jonathan worked together on an English assignment. The drama of high school felt miles away right now. She shut the engine off and looked outside. It was quiet. She got her wand out and ran to the front door.

After two times knocking and ten horrible seconds of waiting Jonathan Byers opened the door. He looked confused at seeing the girl standing at the door. Amelia didn't have time to explain, she pushed past him, happy to be inside again.

'Amelia? What on earth are you doing here?' Jonathan asked. Nancy was sitting in a chair. Next to her on the couch lay someone asleep. Amelia was too busy to look the person over. Nancy looked up at Amelia with the same kind of confused expression as Jonathan.

Amelia hadn't realized she had held her breath since she got out of the car. She released her breath and started talking. 'Guess the message didn't come through then.'

'What message?' Nancy asked while she stood up and walked towards her. There was a stumbling sound coming from where Amelia assumed to be the kitchen. A second later Steve was standing in the doorway. The two stared at each other for a moment. Steve looked different from three days ago. His clothes looked dirty and his hair wasn't as perfectly styled as it usually was. He looked like he had walked in the forest all day, and knowing where his car stood he might have done just that. Still, Steve looked beautiful and perfect to Amelia. Only a moment passed before Steve sprinted towards Amelia and gripped her tight in a hug. She closed her eyes and suddenly a wave of new emotions washed over Amelia. She hadn't realised how scared she was by the monster. She hadn't realised how unsafe she had felt in her own home. But now in Steve arms she felt safe.

'I'm so glad to see you,' Amelia said honestly. She smiled but her eyes started to water too.

'Amelia,' Steve whispered. He seemed at a loss for words. They hugged for a long moment before another voice broke their private moment.

'So...what's going on?' It was Nancy who asked the question. The two let each other go and Amelia rubbed her arm, feeling a little embarrassed. Nancy was staring her down with her arms crossed. Yet Jonathan stood behind her with the tiniest of smiles on his face.

Steve turned around to face Nancy and stood just that bit too close to Amelia. 'Amelia has been attacked tonight. Thought it was better to keep everyone close.'

That wasn't entirely true, Amelia thought. Steve hadn't wanted her to come when they spoke on the phone. But maybe he changed his mind just now when they hugged.

'They attacked you? The monsters?' Nancy asked.

Amelia nodded shortly. 'One of them. I supposed there were more. It ate one of our sheep.'

Jonathan took a step forward to stand level with Nancy. 'And you saw it? But...how did you survive?'

Amelia opened and closed her mouth like a gaping fish. She wasn't sure telling the truth was the best thing right now. She looked at Steve, who looked at her with the same curiosity as Jonathan.

'Guys! Get in here! We have an idea!'

Amelia breathed out deeply. She started to like the Henderson kid more and more.

'Let's see what they have to say,' Amelia said, already on her way to the kitchen. Only now she noticed that there were drawings all over the walls, floor and ceiling. They looked like curly lines that were perfectly connected. There was way more going on than Amelia knew.

In the kitchen where four kids. Dustin she knew, there was Nancy's brother Mike, their friend Lucas and the girl that had moved in to her street, Max. She missed one person in this group and turned around, finally realising who laid on the couch. It was Will Byers. Now that she looked him over he wasn't just asleep. He was dressed in a hospital gown and he looked sick.

'What are you doing here?' Dustin asked, noticing the new person in the room.

All the kids looked up at Amelia. She cleared her throat and tried to sound certain. 'I am here to help.'

Dustin looked like he doubted that, but he didn't say anything else. Then chief Hopper walked into the room. Amelia raised an eyebrow just as he did at her. 'Are you the girl that called?' he asked in his deep voice.

'I am,' she replied.

He just nodded and turned his attention to Dustin. Everyone had gathered around the kitchen table. Amelia stood next to Steve on Dustin's left. Nancy stood on his right with Jonathan next to her. The two stood very close together. Amelia wanted to question them, but realised she was in no position to pass judgement.

Dustin slammed a book on the table and began his speech.

'The mind flayer,' he stated like everyone should get it.

Hopper stood a little behind Mike when he asked what was on everybody's mind. 'What the hell is that?'

'It's a monster from an unknown dimension. It's so ancient that it doesn't even know it's true home. It enslaves races of other dimensions by taking over their brain by using his highly developed psychologic powers,' Dustin rambled on at high speed.

A deep sigh was audible. 'Oh my god none of this is real. This is a kids game,' Hopper said annoyed.

Dustin jumped right into the defence. 'No, no it's a manual. And it's not for kids. And unless you know something that we don't this is the best metaphor-'

'Analogy,' Lucas said.

'Analogy. That's what you're worried about! Fine! An analogy for understanding whatever the hell this is,' Dustin fired back.

So far Amelia was still lost in the story. She had seen the monster and realized Will was sick, but she had no clue what this talk about a game character was all about. However she remained silent, hoping it would explain itself.

Nancy jumped in. 'Okay, so this mind flamer thing...'

'Flayer. Mind flayer,' Dustin corrected.

Nancy sighed. 'What does it want?'

Dustin seemed to be the brains of the team. Or at least now he did all the explaining. 'To conquer us basically. It believes it is the master race.'

'Oh like the Germans.'

Everyone looked incredulously at Steve. There was a pause before Dustin answered.

'Uhh, the Nazi's?'

Steve realised his mistake. He became nervous as he wanted to fall through the ground.

'Yeah, yeah, yeah. The Nazi's.' Amelia couldn't suppress an eye roll.

'Uhh if the Nazi's were from another dimension, totally. It views other races like us as inferior to itself.'

Hopper was losing his patience. He walked away and rubbed his eyes. He looked like he hadn't slept in days. As a matter of fact, everyone in the room looked in poor condition. And to think Amelia had just gone to the hospital for the last couple of days, not realising that there was a big problem at hand.

'It wants to spread and take over other dimensions,' Mike continued. Amelia was startled from her thoughts by his voice.

'We are talking about the destruction of our world as we know it,' Lucas ended dramatically.

There was a pause. Amelia suddenly chuckled. All the eyes turned to her.

'But this isn't real...is it?' she said with a small voice. The silent stares she got told her enough. She averted her eyes and let the information sink in.

Steve freaked out. 'That's great. That's really great,' he said as he paced around with a hand running through his hair. Amelia couldn't help staring at him. A small part of her had clung on to him being the all-knowing superhero. That thought was crushed right away. They were depending on a bunch of thirteen-year-olds with a board game.

Nancy seemed to keep the hope up. 'Okay. So if this thing is like a brain that's controlling everything, then if we kill it-'

'We kill everything it controls,' her brother finished.

'We win,' Dustin said.

'Theoretically,' Lucas added.

Hopper had gotten to the same nerve-racking pacing as Steve. He suddenly jumped up on Amelia's right. 'Okay great. So how do you kill this thing? Shoot it with fireballs or something?' he asked, taking the book Nancy was holding.

Dustin jumped in once more, happy to defend Dungeons and Dragons from ridicule. 'No, no fireballs. You summon an undead army... because the zombies you know they uhh...they don't have brains and, and and the mind flayer it...likes brains.'

Hopper looked about two hundred percent done.

'It's just a game,' Dustin said with a smaller voice.

Hopper threw the book on the table. 'What the hell are we doing here?' He walked away, happy to take a break from the kids.

'I thought we were waiting for your military backup!' Dustin fired at his back.

'We are!'

'But even if they come how are they gonna stop this? You can't just shoot this with guns!' Mike added.

'You don't know that!' Hopper shouted back.

'I do.'

Mike turned around to look at Amelia. Hopper looked over his head and Steve stopped pacing.

'You do?' Mike asked.

Amelia looked at the Wheeler boy. 'I fired a gun at one of those things. It did nothing. I think the skin is too thick to penetrate it.'

'You don't know that for sure,' Hopper said. 'Maybe you aimed wrong or we need bigger weapons.'

'We do know that they killed everyone in that lab!' Mike said back at Hopper.

Lucas jumped in. 'We also know the monster are going to moult again.'

'We know that it is only a matter of time before those tunnels reach this town,' Dustin said, pointing to the drawing on the floor.

Amelia looked to her right where Steve stood. She leaned close to him to whisper: 'Those drawings are tunnels?'

Steve looked down at her with a sorry expression. 'I guess so. I just thought someone started an art project.'

'They're right,' a shaky voice said. Everyone turned to look to the hallway. Amelia had to lean forward to see Miss Byers standing there. She wore a nurse outfit and her eyes were red from crying. Not for the first time that night, Amelia wished she knew what was going on.

'We have to kill it. I want to kill it,' she said determined.

Hopper walked up to her. 'Me too. Me too, Joyce. But how do we do that?'

Joyce sighed and threw a look at the people in her kitchen. She seemed to miss the new person in the group.

'We don't exactly know what we are dealing with here,' Hopper said.

Amelia noticed Mike walking towards them. 'No, but he does. If anyone knows how to destroy this thing it's Will. He is connected to it. He will know his weakness.'

A surge of pity went through Amelia. She followed Mike back into the living room and looked down at the small boy on the couch. *Connected to those monsters?* Amelia couldn't even imagine what that was like.

The red-headed girl, Max, stood next to Amelia when she spoke. 'I thought we couldn't trust him anymore. That he is a spy for the mind flayer now.'

Mike stood in the front of the group. He was thinking hard before answering. 'Yeah...but, he can't spy if he doesn't know where he is.'

Everyone seemed to silently agree. Amelia looked up, expecting someone else to talk.

'So uhm, is it time to ask questions now? Because I am still pretty lost,' She said. Suddenly she felt tired from everything that happened that day. She hadn't expected to come here and be thrown into a huge plot.

Mike turned around to look doubtful at Amelia. 'Yeah, you are right. It's time for questions. Like for example: how did you survive your encounter with the demodog?'

Everyone's interest was piqued. Joyce looked with hope in her eyes, hoping Amelia had the answer to everything. Nancy and Jonathan looked mistrustful and the kids looked like they were waiting on a good ghost-story. Steve was interested too, but he didn't look her directly in the eye.

'I want to explain,' she started, not sure how to do this, 'but it's a bit...unbelievable.'

'Did you hear any word we just said? This entire situation is unbelievable!' Nancy said, throwing her arms out.

Amelia blushed. 'Yeah. But this has nothing to do with Nazi's from other dimensions. This is...something else entirely.'

Hopper sighed. 'I heard enough fairy tales for one night.'

There was a sound that stopped everyone from talking or moving. It was a growl. A growl just like the one Amelia heard coming from the barn. It came from outside. Dustin, who was closest to the window, leaned slowly forward before jerking back.

'Demodog,' he whispered.

Everyone was overthrown with shock.

'How did they find us?' Joyce asked.



'Must be a stray. Otherwise we would be surrounded,' Hopper said, hoping to take some stress away.

'Who says we aren't surrounded?' Lucas whispered.

No one had an answer to that. Nancy walked silently to the door and locked it. Amelia wondered how long that would hold.

Hopper got a gun from god knows where and was pushing everyone behind him. Amelia felt a hand grabbing hers. She looked up at Steve, who tried to pull her behind Hopper. Amelia gave a sorry smile and let him go.

'You get behind us,' she told him.

Steve looked like he saw a ghost. 'Are you out of your mind?!'

Amelia smiled. 'A little.'

Everyone cornered at the couch. Joyce stood in front of Will, ready to let herself be shredded to pieces before they could get to her son. Mike had found a candle holder to defend himself with. Amelia looked at the group and realised none of them stood a chance against the monster. Not even the impressive shotgun the Chief was holding was going to do them any good.

'Get behind me kid,' Hopper told her.

Amelia stood next to him, just one step to the front. 'Don't worry about me.'

The demodog burst through the door. It stood there, taking in the room and its inhabitants. If something like that was possible, Amelia could swear she saw it smirk. It had a smug attitude, seeing his food would be served on a dinner plate.

Amelia got angry. She was angry with the monster for eating her sheep. She was angry for what it would do to the people in this room. She was angry for what they had done to poor Will. She was angry about that *smirk*. For the first time when she got angry, she could actually control what she wanted to do. She stretched her hand out and the creature flew through the air and hit the wall.

There was a collective sigh of shock from the group. Even Hopper had lowered the shotgun to look at her with an astonished expression.

'How did you do that?' he asked.

Amelia smiled real quick before returning her attention to the monster. It was getting back to its feet.

'We're not done yet. Shoot it.'

Hopper fired close to thirty bullets at the demodog but as Amelia had feared it did nothing. The demodog opened its mouth and growled angrily.

'We're in deep shit!' Dustin yelled behind them.

Amelia took another step forward. A slim and smooth piece of wood slipped from the waistband of her skirt into her hand. She held the fragile looking stick like it was a sword.

'No. We are not. *Avada Kadavra!*'

A jet of green light burst from the wand and hit the monster in the face. It fell limp to the ground.

Everyone remained silent for a long moment. The only sound was the rapid breathing of multiple people.

'It's dead,' she announced.

Amelia walked over to the body and kicked it. It budged to her foot but wasn't moving in a lively way. That was the moment they believed her.

'Holy shit!' Dustin yelled. 'How did you do that?'

Amelia turned around to face him. She shrugged. 'I used magic.'

'Look out!'

It was already too late. By the time Amelia had turned her head the

next demodog was already knocking her over. In the shock of the moment she had dropped the wand and it had rolled away. Amelia crawled towards it, when she felt a horrible pain in her leg. There was an ear piercing scream in the room and it took her a moment to realise she was the one making the sound.

'Amelia!' someone yelled. She thought it was Steve. Hoped it was Steve. Amelia looked over her shoulder to see the flaps of the mouth wound around her leg. The thousands of teeth were sinking in her soft skin. She started to smell her own blood and was close to fainting. But if she was out nobody else in the room was going to defend them. She needed to fix this.

She turned to look at her wand. It had rolled too far for her to reach. She stretched her arm as far as it would go. Suddenly there were sneakers standing next to the wand. Max picked up the wand. For a moment she wondered if she should use it, but decided against it. She pushed it in Amelia's hand.

In one smooth movement the witch twisted her body and pointed the wand at the demodog. She shouted the unforgivable curse for the third time that night and then it was over.

Two dead demodogs lay in the living room of the Byers home. A badly wounded witch lay in the middle. Her chest was heaving quickly as she desperately sought air. The wound stung like it was boiling. Everything started to be fuzzy.

Then there was someone holding her head in his lap. A face appeared above her and she tried to focus on it.

'S-Steve?' her voice sounded weaker than she had imaged.

'Yeah, yeah it's me. You gonna be okay.'

That was enough for now. She didn't think about the possibility of a third monster. She didn't think of using a curse she should never use. She wasn't thinking about the shock everyone in the room had.

The only thing in her mind was that Steve said it was gonna be okay.

## 9. Chapter 9

### Eleven

Flashes of horror scenes rushed in front of her eyes. People were shouting in the background.

'You can't do that! There is no reason!'

'I don't know what the hell just happened but you keep away from it!'

'Can you all shut up. I'm trying to wake up,' Amelia said with a cracking voice.

The yelling stopped. Amelia opened her eyes. First everything was blurry and she could just make out the outline of a person walking up to her. When his face and the halo of hair around his head came close Amelia could focus.

'Hey, hey. Take it easy. Don't rush it,' Steve said with a soft voice.

Amelia blinked a couple of times to let her eyes adjust to the room. She saw Steve and behind him stood Hopper. That was probably the person that Steve had been shouting at. He had his arms crossed and looked down at Amelia with a grim look.

'Steve,' Amelia started, testing her voice. It started to sound normal again. She started to notice things again. The first thing she noticed was the pain in her leg. It was still stinging but a lot less than earlier. Amelia leaned forward, wanting to take a look at it. That's when she noticed she was tied up.

Her brow furrowed as she looked up at Steve. 'Steve? What is this?'

His face fell. 'I'm sorry. It was *not* my idea.' He turned his head to look at Hopper. Amelia stared at the Chief too.

'We don't know anything about you kid. I'm not risking anything anymore,' he said by way of explanation. Amelia looked down at the ropes that were around her wrists and ankles. Then she searched around for an important item.

'The wand,' she said, regaining Steve's attention. 'Where is the wand?'

'Safe,' Hopper replied.

'Oh please just give her the thing,' a new voice said. Amelia looked to her left and realised there were more people watching her. Nancy had just spoken. She looked completely done with everything. Next to her were Mike and Joyce.

'It is a weapon. I'm not giving it to her,' Hopper said as he started to pace. 'First she needs to answer some questions.'

Amelia suddenly felt her anger bubble up. 'Yes I saved your lives. Yes I am a useful and powerful asset to your little squad. Yes that wand belongs to my mother who might or might not return to me so *give me the damn wand.*'

Amelia had her angry glare focused on the Chief. He stared her down for a long moment. Steve got up and walked over to the Chief, carrying himself powerful.

'Give the wand.'

Hopper looked from Steve to the ceiling. The lamp was swinging in all directions. Some books clattered from the coffee table to the ground. It took Amelia a moment to realise it was her. She closed her eyes and calmed down. The rattling stopped.

'Wow,' Mike silently said. Amelia looked at him. The younger teen seemed so shocked but also amazed. He looked back at her when he realised she was staring. 'Can you use telekinesis?'

Amelia shook her head slowly. 'No. I already told you. I use magic.'

'Magic isn't real,' Hopper said as a matter of fact.

'Neither are demodogs. Or mind flayers,' Amelia said back without looking at the Chief.

Joyce decided to step in. She walked over to Amelia and untied her.

'Joyce,'

'No. No, Hop. She is not evil. She saved us and nearly died because of it. We are not tying her up.' Joyce smiled at her as she continued on her ankle as Amelia did the other. Then she was free.

'Thank you,' she said with a smile. She stood carefully on both feet. The wound was still very painful. There were some makeshift pads on it to stop the bleeding, but there was no real treatment done. Steve held his hands out, ready to catch her might she fall. The chair felt too low, so she sat on the armrest. She looked over at Will, who still laid on the couch in the same position as first. Amelia figured he wasn't just sleeping.

'Where are the others?' she asked.

'In the shed. Mike came up with a plan,' Nancy said, looking proud at her brother.

There was a moment of silence where everyone decided what the most important thing was to ask.

'How did you kill the monsters?' Joyce asked first.

Amelia looked down at her hands. 'I am not proud of it. The spell I used...it's a curse. A terrible curse. My mother told me once about it. It came to me in the barn when that demodog was lowering his teeth to my face. There are other useful spells I should use. I can stun them...but I suppose survival instinct kicked in.'

'Good.'

Amelia looked up at Joyce. 'What?'

The older woman looked back with a determined fire in her eyes. 'We need to kill them. Stunning isn't good enough.'

She meant it right, but Amelia felt worse. She lowered her head. Steve stood next to her and placed a hand on her back. Amelia blushed a little and tried to look at Nancy from the corner of her eye. Steve was lazily rubbing his thumb over her back.

'Were you born with this...magic?' Nancy asked. Nothing in her voice indicated she minded Steve standing next to another girl, rubbing her

back soothingly. Amelia tried to focus on the question and nodded.

'Yes. We are born either magical or not. My mother is a witch too.'

Amelia heard Steve chuckle. She looked up at him, confused. 'What's so funny?'

Steve looked her in the eye for a moment before staring at the ground. 'Just...the witch part. Fitting Halloween costume.'

Amelia couldn't help smiling too.

'And you were never...taking into a lab?' Mike jumped in. Amelia noticed he was dying to ask something else.

'No. I kept my powers hidden. Or tried to. Are you okay Mike?' Amelia asked with concern.

The Wheeler boy looked away. 'Yeah. I'm fine. I'm fine. I just...when you used your mind to throw that demodog...it made me think of someone. You don't...you never found anyone with the same powers, have you?'

Amelia was completely lost. 'No. Me and my mother are the only witches in Hawkins.'

Mike nodded and silently left the room. Amelia watched him go.

'What else can you do with that...wand?' Hopper asked.

Amelia looked at him accusingly. He sighed deeply and handed the wand back that he had in his pocket. Amelia happily took the smooth wood in her hand, loving the warm feeling it gave her to be connected to it again.

'Not a lot, unfortunately. My father never wanted me to learn how to use magic. It sort of invested in me and became an uncontrollable force that lashes out when I am angry. A wand is just a tool to channel that magic and release it in a controlled way. There are schools for teaching magic, but my father wouldn't let me go.' She played with the wand in her hands, rolling it between her fingers.

'Is...is that what happened in your house? With your mother...' Steve asked, almost afraid to bring it up. Amelia couldn't face him. She just nodded, on the verge of tears.

Will made a little noise in his sleep. Everyone looked at the small boy and Joyce rushed over to his side. She stroked his hair away from his face lovingly and looked up at Amelia.

'Do you think you can help him?' she asked Amelia.

Amelia looked down at Will. She couldn't imagine all the things that had happened to him and that were happening at the moment. She felt so bad for him and wished with all her heart that she *could* save him.

'I don't think so,' she said with a small voice. 'I am not practiced. I might hurt him.'

Everyone took a moment to look down at Will. Everyone pitied the boy silently.

Hopper broke the silence. 'Well, we have a plan. We can use all hands on it,' he said, indicating Steve and Nancy. Nancy left the room right with Hopper. Joyce followed a moment after. Amelia and Steve were alone with the sleeping Will.

'Magic,' Steve said after a moment. 'Witch. Wand. Spells. Curses.' He looked down at Amelia. 'How could you possibly keep all of that secret for sixteen years?'

Steve didn't look angry. He didn't look hurt, or disgusted. He looked interested and a little bit pitiful.

'People don't notice me, remember? I'm the invisible girl,' she replied.

Steve walked into the room and paced a little in front of her. 'Did you want to be invisible? Because you were afraid people would figure out your secret?'

Amelia ran a hand through her hair. There were a lot of knots in it. 'Sort of. I didn't really have to try. I was just never....interesting.'



Steve snorted. 'Not interesting? You have magic!'

'I am not interesting. The magic is not part of my personality,' Amelia defended.

'No, it's a part of *you*,' Steve said, looking her in the eye. 'Amelia, I understand that your father doesn't want you to use magic, but you can't deny that it is a part of you. If there is a school you should still go. You have an opportunity not a lot of people have: you can walk away from the boring daily life and get a way more exciting one.'

Amelia stood up from the chair. She tested her leg for a moment. 'I don't fit in with that world Steve. I was raised in the muggle...non-magical world. I belong here.'

Steve laughed nervously. 'I don't understand why you would give up something so beautiful and cool. You can basically do *everything*. Just because your father made a decision for you when you were a kid doesn't mean you can't make your own now. I mean, why would you want to stay in the normal world?'

Amelia felt a blush creeping onto her face. 'I can think of one thing.'

Steve silently looked at the witch in the room. She was every bit a mystery as she was beautiful to him. He walked over to her and placed his hands on her shoulders. She looked up in his eyes.

'Okay. Maybe one thing,' he said with a smile.

Amelia smiled back. Their faces were very close. Amelia only had to stand on her toes to close the distance between them and relish once more in that wonderful feeling of kissing Steve. But then she remembered Nancy.

'What about Nancy?' she asked shyly.

Steve closed his eyes and took a deep breath. 'I think we broke up at that party.'

Amelia raised an eyebrow. 'You think?'

'Well, it's clear to me she likes Jonathan way more than she knows or

shows. And it hurts, because he was always there during our time together and I feel kind of pushed aside by her. But on the other hand, as she pushed me away I fell into another's arms.'

Amelia forgot how to breathe for a moment. Did Steve really imply *they* could be a couple?

'S-so...I'm not a rebound?' Amelia asked, feeling her cheeks growing ever hotter and her heart beating faster.

Steve chuckled. The sound was like angel song to her. He pushed her hair behind her ear and stared deep into her eyes. 'You are so adorable when you're nervous. No, Amelia. You are not a rebound.' He leaned in, ready to kiss her. Then he withdrew a bit to Amelia's astonishment.

'But if you want to take things slow to prove it..., ' he said, teasingly close to her face. His breath tickled her nose. He was toying with her and Amelia let him.

'Will you shut up and kiss me?' she said.

'So cheeky,' Steve whispered, his lips inches from hers.

'Hey you two!'

Amelia was so startled by the yelling person that she tumbled backwards in the chair. Her leg ended up in an uncomfortable angle and she hissed at the pain.

It was Dustin. He had a smug smirk on his face. 'We need help! Come on lovebirds!'

Steve looked down at the girl that lay awkwardly in the chair. She smiled uncomfortably.

'You two go ahead. I clean up my wound first.'

'You need help?' Steve offered. Dustin however understood his question and jumped in.

'No Steve, she doesn't. You are coming with me,' Dustin said,

dragging Steve by his jacket towards the kitchen door. Amelia chuckled at the comical scene before her and went on a search for bandages.

Steve had no choice but to listen to the little brat that pulled him away from the girl of his dreams. The plan was to cover the shed with newspapers, cardboard and tape to make it unrecognizable for Will. They would question him about the mind flayer and he would have no information to give to him.

Steve ended up covering the windows with Nancy. He didn't remember how he ended up in this situation but here they were. The last thing Steve wanted was to talk to Nancy. He realised that he was in the wrong too, but Nancy had lied to his face. At least when he said *I love you* for the past months he had meant it.

Nancy tore off shreds of tape to hand to him. After about ten minutes of silence she decided to talk.

'Hey,' she started. A long pause. Steve watched her, wondering what she would bring up first. 'What you did...helping the kids,' Steve was surprised to hear she was going that way. Yes he had been strolling around the woods luring Dart the demodog with Dustin and had teamed up with Lucas and Max to almost get eaten in an old school bus, but he wondered whether that was really the first topic they ought to discuss. It was actually another time Nancy let him down. She couldn't even apologize for her part.

'That was really cool.'

Yeez. 'Yeah,' he said, not looking her in the eye. He thought back of his crazy adventures of the day and Dustin's many quirks. 'The shit's a real trouble, you know,' he said affectionately.

Nancy seemed lost in other thoughts. 'Believe me, I know.'

Steve busied himself with the stapler to nail the sail to the window frame. He missed the look Nancy gave him, the one that looked like she was ready to ask important questions. But she decided against it.

After her leg was unprofessionally bound Amelia joined the others in

preparing the shed for Will. Everyone remained silent while sticking pieces of cardboard to the walls. Amelia helped the best she could. While trying to reach for a high point she put a little too much pressure on her injured leg. She stumbled over but was caught by Max. The girl pushed Amelia back on her feet and helped her to reach the part she was aiming for. Amelia knew little about the new family. But the things she did know were disturbing. So when this girl smiled at her she smiled back.

Jonathan carried Will in the room once everything was covered and placed him on a chair. They bound his small wrists and ankles with the same rope Hopper used on her. Mike plugged in some bright lamps and the interrogation room was finished.

Everyone returned to the house except for Mike, Joyce, Jonathan and Hopper. The rest had instructions to remain silent. Nothing could alert Will to his surroundings.

Steve shortly told Amelia he wanted to practice his swings with a baseball bat that was full of rusty nails. After seeing Will carried out in the cold and being tied up Amelia had lost the romantic atmosphere there was earlier. Steve had the same. They needed to focus on more important things now.

Amelia sat down at the kitchen table. The book was still on the table and she tried to move it around with her powers. Anything to pass the time. Steve was in the living room, swinging the bat around, preparing to hit a demodog with it. Nancy was standing to her right, back to the wall and looking at thin air. Max and Lucas were sitting in the hall. Dustin walked past her to the kitchen window looking out over the shed. She could hear his worried breathing from here.

He took off his cap and ran a hand through his curls. He was going to pass Amelia but she stopped him.

'Sit down please.'

Dustin looked at her for a moment. His eyes were watery and he looked very worried. He sat down next to her and laid down on the table with his face and arms.

'He will be alright,' Amelia said softly.

'You don't know that,' he replied.

'I do. You want to know why?' she said, hoping to pique his interest.

His head lifted from the table. 'Because your powers make you see into the future?' he said hopefully.

Amelia chuckled. 'No. I know he will be fine because he went through worse, hasn't he?'

Dustin looked down and nodded.

'Well, he got himself through that, and he is still here. He will get through this too. He is very strong.'

Dustin didn't seem to buy it completely, but he had no comment. He just nodded a bit and was lost in thought. Amelia continued to practice on the book. She commanded it to flip open and select a page. Dustin looked in awe at the ghost-book.

'So, you have to be a character in this game right? What is Will?'

'Cleric,' Dustin answered.

Amelia stopped the pages from flipping. She started reading. 'Clerics are intermediaries between the mortal world and the distant planes of the gods. Clerics are versatile figures, both capable in combat and skilled in the use of divine magic.'

Amelia pulled her eyebrows up in surprise and smiled at the boy with the curly hair. 'Hah. So I'm not the only one with magic around here.'

Dustin actually smiled at that. Amelia was happy to see him happy. Even if it was for a moment.

'We thought you had superpowers. We thought you could control things with your mind when you threw that demodog into the wall.'

Amelia smiled at him. Suddenly there was a more serious look on his face. 'We thought that because we once knew someone with the same

powers.'

Amelia blinked rapidly in confusion. 'A witch?'

'No. Not magic, like you. But more like...like Luke Skywalker. She could let things float with her mind. She even flipped a van once! That was awesome!'

Amelia just stared at Dustin, eager to take in this information. 'Where is she?'

Dustin's smile disappeared. 'Gone. She killed the Demogorgon to save us and it destroyed her.'

Amelia went cold. She hadn't expected this twist in the story. How was this other woman connected to her, or to the demodogs?

'I am sorry to hear that. You knew her well?' Amelia asked.

Dustin shrugged. 'We knew her for a couple of days. She had been trapped in Hawkins lab as an experiment. She escaped and Mike took her home. We took care of her. Gave her food and everything. She didn't really speak, but she helped us find Will last time. Mike is still broken up over her, I know he is. Her name was Eleven. Like the number.'

When Dustin was done talking Amelia had a burning question but she knew she wasn't going to like the answer.

'How old was she?'

'About our age.'

Suddenly she felt like crying. These boys had seen a girl, a friend, die in front of their eyes. This girl had never become older than thirteen. She died battling a monster.

'Yeez,' was all she could say. She thought back at Mike's questions and his eagerness to know more about her powers. She understood now. The kid might have even had a crush on this girl. And then she died.

Then the lights started to flicker. As one, everybody got up and walked up to the window. Amelia followed them. In the shed the lights were going crazy. It was a silent understanding that Will was awake and things were not going according to plan.

And then the flickering stopped. The lights were back on.

'What does this mean?' Amelia asked.

'That Will is silent again,' Lucas replied.

'So now it starts, huh?'

'Now it starts.'

A long time passed in which nothing happened. Everyone was afraid to talk or do anything. They just sat and paced. That silence was broken when the kitchen door slammed open and Hopper walked in, followed by the rest.

'What happened?' Dustin asked.

Hopper ignored him and sat down at the kitchen table across Amelia. She leaned in to look what he was writing.

'I think he's talking, but just not with words,' Hopper replied.

Steve seemed ready to say something. 'What is that?'

'Morse code,' came a group answer. Steve looked up, feeling stupid he asked.

'H E R E,' Hopper spelled out loud.

'Here,' said multiple people.

Hopper looked long and hard at the piece of paper. 'Will's still in there. He's talking to us.' He looked up at Joyce, who seemed to shake with anticipation.

Jonathan darted away into his room and walked out the back door with a radio. Amelia had no time to ask him what the plan was.

Lucas came back in the room with two large walkie-talkies. He handed one to Hopper.

'Okay so the Chief is going to send us the message Will is tapping. We need to translate as quickly as possible,' Lucas informed everyone. They all huddled around the table. Amelia had to admit she didn't know Morse code but they had found a manual that was in the middle of the table. Dustin was ready with a piece of paper and pencil.

The first signal was sent over the radio and Dustin started writing.

'Dash, dot, dash, dot.'

Max and Lucas had taken the manual and yelled happily. 'Okay got it. C.'

Nancy was ready to write down the message. Amelia was sitting next to her, anxious to know what Will would say.

The next one came in and Dustin wrote the code down for Lucas to translate. 'L.'

The messages from Hopper kept coming in at short intervals of minutes. Whatever they were doing in there was working. Nancy was writing the letters down. Steve came up to them, leaning on the back of Amelia's chair to look over their shoulders.

'Close,' he said.

The messages continued until the second word was formed. Nancy held up the cardboard she was writing on and everyone huddled around her to read.

Everyone spoke the two words together. 'Close gate.'

'What ga-,' Amelia wanted to ask. But then the phone rang. Everyone jumped up. The noise could tell Will where he was and that meant more demodogs, possibly something worse.

'Shit! Shit!' Dustin said as he pushed past Nancy to get to the phone. He hung up quickly. There was a moment of catching breath before it



started ringing again. Nancy was ahead of Dustin and yanked the phone off the wall and threw it away with a groan.

'Do you think he heard that?' Max asked, scared of the answer.

'It's just the phone. He could be anywhere,' Steve said. He didn't look convinced by his own words.

'Right?'

A distant howl was the answer to Steve's question. Everyone in the house heard it. Everyone in the house knew what was coming. Dustin just confirmed it by saying: 'That's not good.'

The kitchen door opened and everyone turned around quickly. It was Joyce, followed by Mike followed by Jonathan carrying an unconscious Will.

'They're coming,' Mike said. Jonathan put Will on the couch.

Amelia pulled the wand from her skirt and started to take her stand. Steve walked up to her, bat in his hand.

'You're hurt,' he said.

'And it's going to be a lot worse if I don't do something!' she said back.

Hopper returned with the shotgun and a machine gun. Amelia knew that at this point it was just a habit, more than an actual weapon.

'Hey! Get away from the windows!' he yelled at Lucas, Max and Mike. They hurried away from it and all got in the corner where they had stood before.

Hopper turned to Jonathan and offered him the shotgun. 'You know how to use this?'

'What?' Jonathan said, clearly not keen on holding a weapon.

'Can you use this!' Hopper said in desperation.

Jonathan stumbled over his words as Nancy spoke up. 'I can.'

'I told you before, they are useless,' Amelia informed them.

Hopper turned to her. He looked so angry that she wondered if he was going to shoot her.

'You, shut up. Be useful or don't get in my way.'

Amelia stared him down but took a step back anyway. The front line was formed by Nancy, Steve, Hopper and Amelia. One of them had an actual shot at killing them.

The sounds came from the window.

'Where are they?' Nancy asked, knowing she wouldn't get an answer.

Then the sound was suddenly from the other window in the dining room. Everyone turned as one. Lucas was standing just behind Hopper, slingshot at the ready.

'What are they doing?' Nancy asked again.

Amelia didn't like to be that person, but she couldn't help herself.

'Toying with us,' she replied to Nancy's question.

There was again a new sound at the same window as before. Joyce gave a little yell. Steve stretched his hand and found Amelia's. She gave him a short, hopefully comforting squeeze and let go again. They needed both hands.

They heard the growl even closer this time. Everyone was at the ready, but scared shitless. Amelia wondered if this was her last day breathing. She hadn't really given it a lot of thought since the attack in the barn. Everything was just...instinct.

There was a new sound outside, but it was different from a growl. It sounded more like a hurt animal.

Everything went silent as they listened without breathing.

Then something came crashing through the window. It skidded over the floor until it hit the wall. Some of them screamed and they made a new line, Hopper with his gun pointed at the demodog on the floor. Amelia noticed just a second before the rest did, that it didn't move.

'It's dead,' she breathed.

Hopper wanted to see that for himself. He inched closer with a trigger-happy finger.

'Holy shit,' Dustin breathed.

'Is it really dead?' Max asked, looking from Amelia to Hopper to the body.

Then he nudged it with his foot and everyone relaxed just a tiny bit.

A creaking sound at the door made them all turn around. Amelia was done pretending the guy with the biggest gun was the most powerful. She jumped in front of the group. Steve followed her, holding the bat high.

'Stay behind me,' she hissed as an order to everyone, most of all Hopper.

The lock on the door flipped. Amelia stared at it long and hard. *Demodogs don't do that.* The thought relaxed her a bit, until a next one crossed her mind. *But maybe the mind flayer did.*

The second lock opened. Nobody was holding their weapons down, so neither was Amelia. The first thing she would do, was summon a shielding charm. In a lightbulb moment she remembered the right word for it.

Dustin made an uneasy sound behind her. She turned her face just enough to see him from the corner of her eye.

'I'll protect you.'

Then the door opened. It creaked and swung inside slowly. Walking in, was a girl. A girl wearing jeans, sneakers, a black jacket and a bandana wrapped around her wrist. Her hair was slicked back and

her eyes were dark from make-up. Blood was starting to drip from her nose.

Amelia lowered her wand, just as everyone lowered their weapon. Amelia had no idea who this girl was. But then Mike pushed past her. He looked at the girl like he couldn't believe his eyes.

That was when Amelia realised it was the girl that died.

Eleven.

## 10. Chapter 10

### The babysitter

'Eleven.'

'Mike.'

Amelia was close to crying her eyes out. She didn't know everything about their history, but it wasn't necessary. It was all written on their faces.

Claire had always been so pleased with her boyfriends. Sometimes she would brag about how well the guy knew her, or how special their relation was. Amelia had seen other friends around her get crushes. She had watched relationships and heard stories about how good kissers everyone's boyfriend seemed to be, or how great the sex was.

But up until that moment when Eleven walked into the Byers home, Amelia had never seen anyone in love. Not totally. Not so clearly that it was visible in one second. Not even her parents reached this level of intimacy. And here were two thirteen-year-olds, living and loving more than most people did in all their lives.

The two hugged tightly, like they were afraid the other would turn into smoke if they let go. Eleven cried, her tears mixing with her nosebleed. They looked and sounded so relieved and happy to see each other again. Amelia could only guess how much it had hurt to lose one another.

Mike pulled back to look the small girl the eye.

'I never gave up on you. I called you every night. Every night for-'

'Three hundred and fifty three days,' Eleven finished. Mike looked incredulous. 'I heard.'

For a moment Mike seemed really hurt. 'Why didn't you tell me you were there? That you were okay?'

'Because I wouldn't let her.'

Everyone turned their eyes on Hopper. Amelia fought the urge to roll her eyes. Of course he would be the reason the poor boy had to believe the love of his life was dead for almost a year. She felt like kicking the man in the balls.

He walked up to Eleven. 'What the hell is this? Where've you been?' He asked her, sounding like an angry father.

'Where have you been?' She replied annoyed. Then Hopper pulled her in for a hug. Amelia looked around at the faces in the room. Everyone seemed surprised by this. Apparently no one knew Eleven had been alive, and probably taken care of by Hopper.

It was also the moment Amelia realised she could breathe again. Dustin had told her this girl was a powerful telekinetic. It meant that the demodogs outside were dead and they were safe for now. Amelia took a deep breath and turned around to Steve. He was watching the scene with an almost hilarious face. She smiled at this and hugged him with one arm, the other still holding the wand, just in case.

Steve returned the hug, also holding on to his baseball bat. He looked down at Amelia as she looked up.

'Do you have any idea what is going on?' he asked her.

It shouldn't be a big surprise Steve didn't know Eleven. She doubted Mike was the kind of guy to share his feelings with his older sister. Let alone that she would tell her boyfriend. Ex-friend.

Mike was staring at Hopper like he had just turned to the dark side. 'You've been hiding her. You've been hiding her this whole time!' Mike started hitting Hopper. He turned around, trying to calm him down.

'Hey! Let's talk,' he said. It sounded like an order. 'Alone.'

Amelia hoped Mike would start hitting him again.

They left the room. Eleven seemed uncomfortable by it right away. Hopper took Mike to Joyce's room but they could hear Mike

screaming all the way down the hall.

There was an awkward moment where everyone was still sort of staring at Eleven. Some of them hadn't completely processed the fact that she was really here.

Of course, Dustin was the first to step up. He walked up to Eleven and finally got her attention away from the hall.

'Hey El,' he said with a smile on his face. Then Lucas joined him and Eleven hugged them both.

'We missed you,' Lucas said calmly.

'I missed you too,' Eleven confessed, happy in between her two friends.

'We talked about you pretty much every day,' Dustin confessed. His voice sounded just a bit off, like he was trying not to cry. Then they let go and Eleven studied Dustin's face. She reached out for his mouth.

'Teeth.'

Dustin was taken aback. 'What?'

'You have teeth.'

It was time for the cheerful boy to smile again. He had a little laugh with Lucas and puffed his chest out just a bit more. 'You like these pearls? GRrrrr!'

It wasn't just Eleven who did a double take at Dustin's odd sound. Amelia and Steve looked at each other to confirm they both heard it. They started laughing quietly.

'Eleven?' Max said as she walked over to the other girl. 'Hey, uhm I'm Max. I heard a lot about you.'

She held out her hand for Eleven to shake, but the girl in black glared daggers at her and pushed past her. Max remained still with her head low. Amelia pitied her. As much as Eleven seemed like a good person

this was just mean. She was pretty sure Max hadn't done anything to offend her. Amelia stepped away from Steve and stood next to the redhead. She placed a hand on her shoulder. Max looked up for a moment before returning her eyes to the floor.

Eleven was hugging Joyce now. 'Everyone knew her?' Amelia asked Dustin.

'Yeah pretty much. Like I said, she helped to get Will back last time.'

She looked down at the three kids standing next to her. 'And none of you knew she was still alive? Only Hopper?'

Both boys just stared at Eleven and Joyce. Jonathan had just moved Will back to his bedroom, but he was back now. He and Nancy were standing close, silently whispering.

'I had no idea,' Dustin said honestly.

'Me neither. If I did I would tell Mike first,' Lucas added.

Amelia believed them. She would love to have a little conversation with Hopper about his reasons to hide this girl from her friends. If anything it seemed creepy and wrong.

The return of Eleven gave everyone hope. After all the hard times where they expected to die because of the demodogs they had a real weapon now. A weapon to close the gate and bring an end to all this.

Amelia had mixed feelings about Eleven. Clearly she had a special place in the heart of some people around here. She was powerful and had a horrible past which no kid deserves. She looked like she needed a serious hug and the warmth of a parent. On the other hand, she was a ticking time bomb. She looked angry with everything except when she looked at Mike. She had been rude to Max, who had been through enough as well. It also disturbed Amelia that she seemed so comfortable with killing. She wondered if the girl had this shaking, twisting feeling in her gut when she had murdered something. Because Amelia did.

Steve didn't know the girl. The two had a conversation with Nancy and Jonathan where they explained what happened last year. Steve



was in the story, but he seemed to hear a lot of things for the first time. His eyes popped wide open at Eleven's story. What surprised Amelia the most, is that Nancy owned up she had been in the other dimension; the upside down. That one night she and Jonathan had walked into the forest to look for the monster. She had climbed through a hole and ended up in the other place. The witch looked in astonishment at Steve. He had never heard this story. He hadn't understood what Nancy went through. He thought the assault he witnessed was the worst that had happened. *How, Amelia wondered, Can you love and trust someone if you don't tell them about your worst trauma's? How can you expect support when you don't rely on them?*

It became clearer and clearer that Jonathan had been her real support last year. Steve was there for, what? The sex? Amelia scowled at Wheeler for being so unfair to Steve. Halfway their story she walked out and found her way towards Will Byer's bedroom. The boy laid in the bed. He was sweating all over, but the window was still open and it was actually very chilly. She sat down on the edge of the bed and looked down at the small boy. She bit her lower lip, wondering how stupid it was to talk to an unconscious, possessed boy.

'Hey Will,' she started whispering, 'You remember me?'

There was (of course) no response. She touched his hand and was surprised by the temperature. There was really no reason for him to be this hot. Well, except for the demon in his body maybe.

'I-I talked to you in the hallway of school a couple of days back. You...you were worrying about what people thought of you because of the Ghostbusters thing. Jeez does that feel like a century ago. When you were worrying about that and I was wondering about my reputation. Why does High School seem so important, huh?'

At this point she really wished he talked back. A single tear slipped down her cheek.

'I need you to be okay Will. I need you to wake up and banish that... thing. I need you to return to the halls of Hawkins High and worry about stupid teenager stuff again. Can you do that?'

There was a long silence.

'Why are you talking to him?'

Amelia turned her head quickly. Behind her stood the girl of the hour. Eleven.

The witch wiped the tear off her cheek. 'I...don't know.'

Eleven sat down next to Amelia and stared at the wall. 'Mike says you are different too.'

All she could do was nod. 'Not like you though. I don't use telepathy. I use magic.'

The younger girl looked up at the older one with an confused expression. 'Magic?'

'Yeah. You know what that is?'

She shook her head.

Amelia took a deep breath. 'Magic is...something you're born with. It is a force or power. It is all around us and it influences the world. Only, most people don't know it. To me, magic is a part of me. I can use it, but most of the time I don't control it. I never learned how. I am trying my best now, but I don't really know what I am doing.'

Eleven nodded. 'So not too different from me.'

Amelia smiled at her. 'I suppose not. But what I mean is, we can't use each other's powers. Yours is yours and mine is mine.'

'Are there more people like you?'

'Yes, a lot actually. All around the world. But here in Hawkins it's just me and my mother,' Amelia explained.

Eleven looked down at the mentioning of a mother. For a long time they remained in silence.

'Eleven, I wanted to thank you. For saving all of us. You are very

powerful,' Amelia said carefully.

'Yes.'

She studied the girl beside her and chose her words with care. 'Earlier tonight there were more of them. I killed three.'

'Good.'

'Yeahh,' Amelia said, wondering how Eleven would take this. 'So, how do you feel when you...kill?'

The girl looked up. 'I don't understand.'

Amelia licked her lips. 'Does it bother you? Do you feel...bad?'

She raised an eyebrow. 'Feel bad? They are monsters.'

'Yes absolutely. But...killing is bad.'

Eleven started to look irritated. Amelia had to be really careful. She didn't want to end up on the bad side of her.

'What I am trying to say is, you shouldn't kill without realising what you are doing. I for example hate what I had to do. Yes it was in defence and to save the others, but to kill is something serious. We don't get to decide who lives and dies.'

She had lost the girl. She saw it in her eyes. That was the moment Joyce walked into the room. 'Ah here you are. We need you sweetie,' she said to Eleven. The girl gave Amelia a last look that made her feel uneasy. Then she stood up and Amelia followed. She looked down once more at Will before leaving his room.

They had gathered in the kitchen again. The carton with the message *close gate* was in the middle of the table.

Amelia walked in just as Hopper responded to something. 'It's not like it was before. It has grown. A lot. And I mean that is even when we get in there because that place is crawling with those dogs,' he informed them. Amelia assumed it was about the gate they had to close. The one in Hawkins lab that allowed passage for the demodogs

and Mind Flayer.

'Demodogs,' Dustin said quickly.

Hopper blinked lazily. 'I'm sorry what?'

'I said demodogs. Like Demogorgon...dogs. You put them together it sounds pretty bad-ass.'

'how is this important right now?' He asked, not having the energy to get angry.

Dustin swallowed quickly and looked away. 'It's not. I'm sorry.'

'I can do it,' Eleven said.

Hopper looked at her with those weary eyes. 'You are not hearing me.'

'I'm hearing you. I can do it.'

Mike jumped in. 'Even if El can there is still another problem. If the brain dies, the body dies.'

'I thought that was the whole point,' Max said, looking confused.

'It is but if we're really right about this...I mean if closing the gate kills the Mind Flayers army...'

Amelia understood. 'Will dies.'

There was an uncomfortable silence and Amelia dared looking at Joyce who seemed horror-struck. She knew she had no right to talk to her, but she tried anyway.

'Joyce,' she said, trying to lay a hand on her shoulder. Before she could touch Will's mother she stood up and went to Will's room.

'Joyce!' Amelia followed her.

Joyce, Amelia, Hopper, Jonathan and Nancy piled into the room. Everyone looked down at Will's small body in the big bed. Dressed in a hospital gown and robbed of all comfort.

'He likes it cold,' Joyce said, looking at the open window.

Amelia averted her eyes to follow Joyce's. 'What?'

'It's what Will kept saying to me. He likes it cold.'

Something changed in Joyce then. She took a deep breath and went over to the window to close it. 'We keep giving it what it wants!'

Nancy stood next to Will when she joined in. 'If this is a virus, and Will is the host...'

'Then we need to make the host inhabitable,' Jonathan finished.

'So if he likes it cold-,'

'We need to burn it out of him.'

Amelia was taken aback by the sudden fire in Joyce her voice. She no longer saw her son lying in the bed. She saw the monster that inhabited his body. Amelia worried about the 'burning' part.

'But don't you hurt Will too then?' she couldn't help but ask.

Jonathan looked up at her, getting back on his feet. 'Amelia, everything is hurting him right now. It's about staying alive!'

'Yes I get that! But are you ready to torch your brother?!' she shot back, feeling frustrated.

He looked like Amelia had given a low blow. 'If I have to.' Then he pushed past her out of the room. Amelia looked back at Joyce.

'I'm sorry. I just hope this isn't a mistake,' she said, feeling small.

Miss Byers placed her hands on Amelia's upper arms and looked her in the eye.

'It isn't. I can feel it. It is this or...'

Amelia sighed and pulled Joyce in for a hug. It was a short and firm hug, and when she let go Joyce seemed determined to carry out her new plan. She left the room too.

'We have to do it somewhere Will doesn't know this time,' Mike said, who had come into the room as well.

'Yeah, somewhere far away,' Dustin finished.

'I know a place,' Hopper said, more to himself than the other people in the room. He scooped Will up with the blanket and carried him out. Amelia watched through the window as they loaded the small boy in the car, with Jonathan and Joyce almost ready to leave.

Amelia felt a hand on her back. The way it was placed and lay soothingly between her shoulder blades told her who it was.

'I hope to god they are right,' Amelia whispered.

'I'm sure they are,' Steve assured.

She leaned on his shoulder as they continued to stare out the window. His hand rubbed her back and Amelia could appreciate the little moment without tension.

'Hey,' Nancy said right behind them. The two broke apart to look at her. She seemed irritated but also flustered. 'We need to look in the junk for heaters. Are you helping me Steve?'

Both understood the message. *We need to talk.* Steve followed Nancy, glancing back with a tired smile.

Steve wondered who was more in the wrong, him or Nancy. Both had gotten interested in another before officially ending things. Both had refused to talk about it so far. He was angry but also ashamed. As they started digging in the pile, one thing was clear: she liked Jonathan and he liked Amelia. There was no reason to be dodgy about it.

'You should go with him. With Jonathan,' He said as a matter of fact. He found a familiar string of Christmas lights that had warned them about the Demogorgon last time. That seemed so long ago.

'No, I don't want to leave Mike,' she said. Steve wondered at this point whether she was really worried about her brother (who seemed way more involved in the entire thing anyway and didn't need his big

sister to guard him) or whether she hoped not to be too obvious in wanting to be with Jonathan.

'No one is leaving anyone,' he said. If this day had taught him one thing it was that he had grown fond of the kids. He could handle them.

'I may be a shitty boyfriend,' Steve said, taking out a device that looked promising, 'but it turns out I'm actually a pretty damn good babysitter.'

Nancy gave him a look. A look that wasn't about Jonathan or Amelia or the kids. For a moment it was about them. Like it was before Halloween. Before Nancy was so obviously lying about being okay. A look that told him, for the first time, that she was really sorry about how they fell apart.

'Steve,' she said with a hoarse voice.

'It's okay Nancy. It's okay.'

He was about to walk away, when her voice stopped him. 'Do you love her?'

Steve had his back turned on her. For a long moment he stood there. Then he turned to face his ex-girlfriend.

'No. Not yet anyway. I...' the realisation hit him as he said it, 'I hardly know her.'

Nancy smiled. 'Sometimes that isn't necessary. She is the same girl isn't she? The one I would catch you staring at sometimes? She looks so different now, it took me a long moment to see it. I remember catching you staring at her once and asking who she was. You said: 'That's Amelia. I don't know her, and she doesn't know me, but she is just...interesting.' I didn't know what you meant back then. I might still not now. But you had your eye on her way before we started dating.'

Steve felt exposed and vulnerable. He rubbed the back of his neck. 'Nance...I really didn't know her. I just...I dunno looked out for her or something. I can't explain it. When she cut her hair and everything

she was just...'

'Perfect?' Nancy offered.

He sighed and lowered his hand. 'Something like that.'

Another moment of silence. 'You should go,' Steve said again.

Nancy nodded. 'Look out for my brother okay?'

Steve smiled and crossed his arms. 'Like I said, your babysitter is on stand-by.'

She smiled at him and turned to return to Jonathan. He might really be interested in Amelia. He might be ready to move on from Nancy Wheeler.

But it still hurt.

Amelia stood on the porch, leaning against the pole. Mike and Eleven were saying goodbye. Amelia started to see it. Eleven didn't trust people. She wouldn't be honest with anyone except for when they earned a place in her heart. She had every reason to, knowing where she grew up. But she had no connection with anyone as she had with Mike.

She stepped into the police truck with Hopper and Nancy got in with the Byers. Amelia wasn't surprised to see Nancy joining them. Before she stepped inside she had shared a look with Amelia and gave her a quick smile. That was a good sign for the conversation, she figured.

The cars drove away and everyone that remained behind was in front of the house now. Steve was the last to join them. They all watched the cars drive away. Amelia wondered for a second if there was anyone in those two cars that she wouldn't see again. She pushed the thought far away.

'Come on guys. We have to put a corpse in the fridge,' Dustin said.

As he walked back into the house everyone looked incredulous at his back. Lucas, Max and Mike followed him. Amelia stopped Steve.



'How did the talk go?' she asked.

Steve looked down at his shoes. Suddenly she felt very stupid.

'I'm sorry. I didn't mean to- it's not any of my business. You and her are...anyway, forget I asked. I'll uh help Dust-'

Steve grabbed Amelia's hands in his and held them firmly. She looked up into his eyes. 'Amelia don't be stupid. You have every right to ask,' Steve said quickly.

A blush started to spread on her cheeks. 'I do?'

Steve chuckled. 'You are the most unsure girl I ever met.'

She ran a hand through her hair. 'In my defence, it's a weird night.'

'Yeah you could say that,' he replied, staring at the fog. Amelia squeezed his hands. He looked back down at her.

'I understand more than you think Steve. I understand that you still love, or at least have feelings for Nancy. Those don't leave in one drunken night. I understand you feel guilty for what we did. I do too. I think we both agree that that was a mistake. I should have just... talked to you and given you a hug. Maybe we wouldn't feel so awkward right now. I also understand you don't feel justified to feel hurt because Nancy chose Jonathan over you while you were still together. You can't feel justified because you were wrong too. But that doesn't make it hurt less that she turned her back on you. If I weren't here...I don't know...I might think you would feel worse.'

'So much worse,' Steve said honestly. 'Right now you and those kids inside are the only thing that keep me grounded. The only thing that keeps me from panicking and thinking about the end of the world.'

Steve let go of one hand to place it on her cheek. His thumb softly stroked the skin there. A warm feeling spread through her body at his touch. He looked her deep in the eyes before he said what he wanted to say.

'I need you.'

Amelia felt the same. If Steve would disappear now she would be lost. He was her lifeline and he was hers. She stood on her toes and they both leaned in for a kiss.

'Steve! Kid doing dangerous stuff without supervision in here!' Dustin yelled through the house. The door was closed but they could still hear him clearly. Amelia chuckled as Steve sighed in frustration.

'That is the second time tonight,' Steve said.

'I might have to kill that kid if I ever want a kiss,' Amelia joked. Steve laughed and kissed her forehead instead. Then they walked back in.

Turns out Dustin only wanted Steve to carry the body of the demodog because it was too heavy for him. That, or he didn't want to touch the slimy body.

Dustin pulled everything from the fridge. 'Alright. It should fit now.'

Amelia placed herself on the kitchen table as she watched Steve standing awkwardly with the body in his hands.

'Is this really necessary?'

Amelia chuckled, gaining herself the attention. 'I don't know, but it's funny.'

'Shut up please,' Steve said, slightly annoyed.

'Yes it is, okay! This is a ground-breaking scientific discovery. You can't just bury it like some common mammal, okay. It's not a dog!' Dustin defended.

Despite what Amelia said a little earlier, she actually really liked Dustin. He was the only one not moping around. Because really, what was the point in that? After El had left, Mike had returned to a sombre state. Like life didn't matter when El wasn't around.

'Alright, alright,' Steve said annoyed as he walked over to the fridge. 'But you're explaining this to Misses Byers alright?'

Steve pushed but the head was too big. A slimy sound came from the

body as it was forced in the fridge.

'Help me out.'

'What am I supposed to do?'

'Hold the door.'

Before Dustin could comply Amelia waved her wand and the door closed, efficiently closing the demodog in without hitting Steve. Then he turned around.

'You're welcome,' Amelia said, smiling brightly. Steve sighed from the heavy lifting and rubbed Dustin's head. Somehow Amelia could see an unlikely but wonderful bond form between the two. Then Steve looked from Dustin to Amelia.

'She's awesome isn't she?' Steve said dreamily.

'Kinda,' Dustin answered.

Then they heard Lucas talking in the other room. Mike reacted heatedly, probably about the danger El was in now.

'Demodogs!' Dustin yelled, actually following the conversation. Amelia jumped off the table and patted Steve on the back as a 'well done' gesture. He wrapped his arm around her waist and drew her close for a little moment. He muttered something in her ear that she didn't catch, but the feeling of his lips at her ear gave her goose bumps. She playfully pushed him away and they followed Dustin in the living room, where Lucas and Max were sweeping up the broken glass.

'The chief will take care of her,' Lucas said.

'Like she needs protection,' Max added in, still sour over her moment with El.

'Listen dude, a coach calls a play in a game. Bottom line, you execute it. Alright?' Steve said, wishing for a moment of peace after a long night.

'I agree with Steve,' Amelia said, crossing her arms. 'No matter how much I hate to listen to Hopper.'

'Okay first of all this isn't some stupid sports game,' Mike fired back at Steve. 'And second: we're not even in the game. We're on the bench.'

'Right, so my point is...' Steve said, looking lost, 'Right yeah. We're on the bench. So there is nothing we can do.'

'That's not entirely true,' Dustin said, looking up at Steve like asking him for permission to speak. 'I mean these demodogs they have a hive mind. When they ran away from the bus they were called away.'

'So if we get their attention...' Lucas picked up.

'Maybe we can draw them away from the lab,' Max said.

'And clear a path to the gate,' Mike continued. He started to see a possibility to help the girl of his dreams.

'We can buy them time,' Amelia said. Before she knew it Steve was angrily looking at her. 'Yeah and then we all die.'

'That's one point of view,' Dustin said wisely.

Steve looked down. 'No that's not a point of view man. That's a fact.'

Amelia saw Mike's face contort before he pushed past Steve and Dustin. 'I got it!'

Everyone followed the enthusiastic boy to the kitchen, where he pointed out a point in the drawings of the vines.

'This is where the chief dug his hole. This is our way into the tunnel. So...'

Before they were even in the kitchen he ran back to the living room 'Here, right here! This is like a hub. So you got all the tunnels feeding in here. Maybe if we set this on fire...'

'Uh yeah, that's a no,' Steve said sassily. He was completely dismissed.

'The Mind Flayer would call away his army.'

'They'd all come to stop us.'

'Hey,'

'Then we circle back to the exit.'

'Guys...'

'By the time they realise that we are gone,'

'El would be at the gate.'

'And even if it goes wrong they would drop dead or disappear once it's closed,' Amelia finished.

'Hey, hey, hey!' Steve yelled, clapping his hands. 'This is not happening.'

'But,'

'No, no, no, no! No buts. I promised to keep you shitheads safe, and that's exactly what I plan on doing. 'We're staying here on the bench, and we're waiting for the starting team to do their job. Does everybody understand?'

'This isn't a stupid sports game!' Mike tried again.

'Steve we could do it too. Just us two,' Amelia offered.

'What? No! You're not leaving us out!' Dustin yelled.

Steve clapped again. Then he pointed his finger at Amelia. It was so close to her face that her eyes went cross-eyed.

'I suspect a little more backup from you. I said we are staying here. Does everybody understand that?'

Steve sounded like a cross parent. Or a babysitter maybe. 'I need a yes.'

The kids were reluctant to answer, but then they were distracted by

the sound of wheels drifting outside. Max ran to the window, followed by Lucas and the others. 'It's my brother. He can't know I'm here. He'll kill me. He'll kill us,' she said, looking at Lucas.

'You live on Cherry Street right?' Amelia asked.

Max looked over her shoulder. 'Yeah. Why?'

Amelia peered out through the window. 'Then I know your brother. Horrible piece of shit. Sorry.'

'No need for sorry, he is. I need to get out of here,' she said, panicked.

'Nobody is going out. Let me deal with this,' Steve said, being the grown up again.

'Steve, maybe you should let me...,' Amelia offered.

He placed a hand on her shoulder. 'No. This is personal too. Let me handle him. Just uh, have my back, okay?'

She looked him in the eyes. 'Always.'

Steve was standing outside the house. He stood between Billy and his sister. Amelia had ordered the kids to stay away from the window, so Billy wouldn't see them. They all stayed behind the door, trying to listen to the conversation. Amelia was worried she would miss it when things went south. She pressed her ear to the door and listened to how Billy tried to humiliate Steve.

What she knew about Billy: he was an asshole. He treated people like garbage, would fuck every girl that was pretty enough in his eyes and abused his younger sister. Oh yeah, and he seemed to have it out for Steve. What a sum up for the greatest guy of the year.

'Shit!' Amelia heard the kids say. When she had tried to listen she forgot to watch the kids, and they had crept back to the window.

'Did he see you?' Amelia asked, panicked.

'Uhh,' was Dustin's reply.

Amelia got up from the floor and pushed the kids. 'Get into the kitchen, now!'

She herself ran to the window to see Steve on the ground. Then the door banged open and Billy was inside.

'Well, well, well,' He said, slamming the door closed. 'Lucas Sinclair. What a surprise.'

Suddenly there was a person between Billy and the kids. He didn't take a step back but he was caught by surprise. Amelia had to look up a bit to stare him in the eye, which was annoying.

'You stay away from them,' she hissed.

Billy laughed as he looked Amelia up and down. 'Hey baby. What are you doing, throwing yourself in the mix?'

Amelia slipped the wand in her hand and held it behind her back. 'I'm warning you Hargrove. Get out.'

He laughed mockingly. 'I didn't know Harrington switched bitches. Or does he have two now?'

Within a second the wand was in his face as she screamed: '*Flipendo!*'

Billy was thrown back into the door. He hit it hard enough to hear something breaking. Whether it was Billy or the door nobody knew.

Then he got up again. 'You little bitch! What the hell did you do?!'

'I'm telling you one last time. Get. Out.'

Billy took a couple of steps closer. Amelia pointed the wand at him, hoping he caught the warning. What Amelia forgot, was that he was an excellent basketball player. He dove under her arm and knocked it to the side, like he would normally get the ball from someone. Only now it made her drop the wand and he pushed so hard that her arm broke. Amelia screamed out in pain as she tumbled to the ground.

'Now, where were we?' He looked from Lucas to Max. 'I thought I told you to stay away from him Max.'

'Billy, go away.'

'You disobeyed me. And you know what happens when you disobey me. You already saw me do it to your voodoo friend over here.'

'Billy-,'

'I break things!'

Suddenly he jumped on Lucas, pushing him back into the kitchen. Mike and Dustin yelled after him, but were too afraid to step in. Amelia was glad they didn't. She searched the ground for her wand. The damn thing was hard to find with all the drawings on the ground, making it a maze.

'Billy stop! Stop!'

Amelia heard glass break. *Shit. Where is the damn wand?*

Billy leaned down over Lucas to say something, most definitely a threat. Then he yelled.

'You stay away from her! You hear me?'

'I said get off me!' Lucas yelled back when he kicked Billy. Amelia finally found her wand and was in the kitchen before Billy could advance again.

'Now you just really deserve it. *Stupify!*'

The spell zoomed at his head, but was off just a little. It was enough for Billy to dodge in time. Her aim was off with her wrong hand.

'How do you do that little bitch? Max you really choose the biggest freaks in this town!'

'Oh you have no idea. *Stupify!*'

This time it did hit Billy, but only in the shoulder. It wasn't enough to make him unconscious, but he was stunned in his left arm. However his punching arm was the right one. He punched Amelia good and hard in the jaw and made her stumble backwards.



'You are dead bitch. Dead!'

Amelia expected to hit the wall, but when she ran into something much smoother she turned quickly. He pushed her gently to the side.

'No. You are,' Steve said as he punched Billy in the face.

'Steve!' Max yelled. It was probably a warning.

Billy started laughing. It was a high-pitched, annoying laugh. 'Looks like you got some fire in you after all, huh? I've been waiting to meet this King Steve everyone's been telling me so much about. And all it took was to offend your pretty, nuts girlfriend here.'

'Get out,' Steve warned, teeth clenched.

Billy stared at him. It was clear he wasn't going to leave. He swung his arm around but Steve dodged it. Then Steve quickly landed another blow on the annoying asshole.

'Yes! Kick his ass Steve!' Dustin encouraged.

'Get him!'

'Get that shithead!'

Steve was so filled with rage that he kept hitting Billy. There seemed no stop to him. When he took a moment rest everyone missed the plate Billy picked up and smashed over Steve's head.

Then the tables were turned. Billy wanted to advance again but Dustin quickly stuck out his foot so Steve could run into the living room. Amelia got in Billy's way. She wasn't quick enough to cast a spell so she went for a punch. The punch was so unsatisfyingly soft that Billy stopped to stare her down.

'Wow. You might have tricks up your sleeve but you do fight like a girl.'

He grabbed her around her neck and pushed her in the wall. Then he lifted her up, until her toes couldn't reach the floor anymore.

'Stop it! Stop it! You're killing her!'

'No!'

She started to see double. Billy released her and she tumbled to the ground.

'And stay down this time!'

Then he kept on going to Steve. He held him by the jacket. 'No one tells me what to do.'

He slung Steve around the room like a rag doll. The kids were yelling, Billy was doing some sort of victory groan.

Then he was on top of Steve and pummelled on his face. Again and again and again Steve got a blow. More blood was drawn every time. Amelia wheezed, searching for air but getting too little. She wanted to scream. She wanted to get up and yank that guy off Steve. Honestly, she wanted to use the curse again. The unforgivable one. She couldn't, because this was a human being, but she wanted to.

And suddenly Max was on Billy's back and stuck a needle in his neck.

'The hell is this?' He asked as he advanced Max slowly. 'You little shit, what did you do?'

He stumbled and fell backwards to the floor. And started laughing. This guy was a maniac.

Max picked up Steve's baseball bat and walked over to him, holding the weapon over her head.

'From here out you leave me and my friends alone. Do you understand?'

'Screw you.'

She brought the bat down between his legs, inches from his crotch.

'Say you understand! Say it. Say it!'

'I understand,' came a slow reply.

'What?' Max asked, challenging him.

'I understand,' he said clearer. Then he went out.

Amelia looked around her. Steve was out. Billy was out. Max looked like a serial killer and Lucas possibly had some bruises. And she felt like passing out too. She coughed up blood, felt very tired and went to a peaceful sleep.

## 11. Chapter 11

We are nearing the end my dears.

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### The Defender

Amelia had some odd dreams about tap-dancing demodogs and Dustin who co-ordinated them like an orchestra conductor. She jerked away from her dream when one of the demodogs turned to her and asked: '*Can I have this dance?*'

'And she's awake,' a voice said beside her.

Everything was blurry for a moment. There were lights passing her left and right. She noticed a constant sound. The sound of an engine.

Amelia laid on her back and pushed herself in a sitting position. She adjusted her eyes to the dim light and realised she was in a car.

'Take it easy,' the same voice said. She looked to her right and found Dustin, smiling at her. She blinked lazily before speaking.

'Where am..., ' she couldn't finish the sentence because her throat was thick and painful. She coughed and a wheezing sound came out when she tried to breathe.

'He got you pretty bad,' Dustin said, looking at her neck. It had purple marks on it where Billy's hands had been. 'And to answer your question: you are in a car.'

Talking didn't help her, so she looked around. On her left sat Mike, squeezed between the door and Steve's body, who was still unconscious and lying next to where she had laid. He looked terrible. The corner of his mouth looked ripped and his head was covered in blood and bruises. Amelia noticed a rainbow Band-Aid that was put over a cut in his cheek. His eyes were thick from swelling.

'He looks terrible,' she whispered. It hurt less than talking out loud.

'Yeah. Billy was like a raging machine. Kept hitting him over and

over. Steve was out long before he stopped hitting,' Dustin said. He got an ice pack and reached behind Amelia to put it to his forehead. Just as he did so Steve started to stir. He moved a bit and breathed raggedly. He tried to open his eyes but could hardly do so because of the swelling.

'Nancy?' he said as he looked at Mike. Mike looked offended.

Then he groaned and his hand reached up for his face. 'No don't touch it,' Dustin said, taking his hand away.

Steve looked up and saw the faces of Amelia and Dustin. 'Hey buddy. Shh.'

Amelia found his hand and held it lightly. 'Hey handsome.'

'It's okay you put up a good fight,' Dustin encouraged. 'He kicked your ass but you put up a good fight okay? You're okay.'

'Okay you're gonna keep straight for half a mile and make a left on Mount Sinai,' a new voice said.

In all the confusion Amelia had forgotten to check who was driving the car.

'What's going on?' Steve said slowly.

Amelia looked at the driver and the redhead looked back over her shoulder. The witch her eyes went big as she realised that they were not in a good situation.

'Max,' Amelia wheezed. 'Why are you driving?'

'Oh my god!' Steve exclaimed.

'Relax. She has driven before,' Dustin said, seemingly the voice of reason.

'Yeah in a parking lot,' Mike argued.

'That counts,' Lucas defended.

'No we're gonna die,' Steve said, starting to panic. Amelia wasn't feeling too good about this herself.

'Max, let me drive!' Amelia said as stern as she could.

'No I've got this. You still have a broken arm. Now shut up and let me concentrate,' the redhead defended.

Amelia had forgotten about her arm. She noticed that the kids had made her a make-shift sling from a pillow case.

'We didn't want to leave you two behind. But you have to promise you are gonna be cool, okay?' Dustin said.

'Cool? We're not save!' Amelia yelled.

'No! We're going home!' Steve yelled, getting more and more awake.

Max hit the gas and the car sped through the street even faster. Steve sat up by holding onto Amelia. He leaned forward to talk to Max. 'Stop the car! Slow down!'

'I told you he was gonna freak out!' Mike yelled at Dustin.

'Stop the car!'

'Shut up! I'm trying to focus!' Max yelled.

'Max just stop the car and let me drive! I am better with one hand than a non-experienced kid!' Amelia yelled back.

'I'm not a kid and I've got this!'

'Make a left!' Lucas yelled over the sound of the engine roaring.

'What?'

'Make a turn left!'

The car skidded over the asphalt as Max yanked the wheel around. They hit a mailbox. Everyone was screaming, including Max.

'MAX!' Amelia yelled. She was thrown backwards to lie down again.

Steve clutched her body close, screaming in her ear. The car became steady again, driving a bit slower this time.

'We're still alive,' Steve said, looking like he didn't believe it.

Both of them sat up. They both had stern looks on their faces as they glanced at Max through the rear-view mirror.

'Max,' they said as one.

'It's okay I've got it now,' she said.

'Give her a chance,' Dustin said, somehow remaining calm.

'She just hit a mailbox!'

'Well, there are no mailboxes on this street.'

'Dustin I swear I'm going to-,' Steve started.

Amelia pushed him slightly. 'Calm down Steve. Maybe this actually goes better when we stop screaming.'

'Thank you,' Mike said, looking out the window, wishing he was elsewhere.

'And what is *this*? Where are we going?' Steve asked as his hand reached for his face again. He felt bad but he had no idea how bad he looked.

'To help El,' Mike said sharply.

'No, no no no. We already had this conversation. We are not...'

Amelia had placed her good hand on his shoulder. 'Steve. Maybe we can better do this. The entire plan might fail if those demodogs get to Eleven.'

He stared at her. 'And you want to do what they said? Torch the tunnels and hope we make it out alive?'

Amelia smiled. 'Yeah. I think we can and we should.'

'You are insane,' he huffed, resting his head.

'Maybe a little,' she confessed. Then her throat played up and she coughed again. It hurt so much to cough. Little blood splatters came into her hand.

Steve was up again and watching her with concern. 'How are you?'

Amelia smiled bitterly. 'Peachy. Remind me that next time I see your brother Max, he won't get away without a scratch.'

'Be my guest,' Max sighed.

Amelia looked back at Steve. The swelling around his eyes seemed to lessen a bit. 'What about you?'

'I feel horrible. I know I look horrible. And we are probably going to die. So...peachy.'

They both chuckled. Amelia saw Mike turn further away from the two. She looked down and turned to Dustin.

'Did you make my sling?' she asked the boy with the cap.

He nodded. 'It's broken, isn't it?'

Amelia tried to move her arm, but a sharp pain stopped her right away. 'I think so. Dustin, did you by any chance bring the bag I had in the Byers house?'

'What bag?' Steve asked.

'I brought a bag with me. I took it from the car when you were talking with Nancy and brought it inside. It was a brown leather bag. You didn't see it, did you?' she asked Dustin.

'Actually...'

Dustin reached over the seat to withdraw her bag. 'We stuffed it with stuff we wanted to bring. It was the first one I saw.'

Amelia took the bag from his hands and was relieved to find the item



she was looking for inside.

'Dustin I could kiss you right now.'

The boy seemed shy for the first time. 'That w-would be okay. But why?'

Amelia pulled an old book from the bag and laid it on her lap. Dustin and Steve were leaning in. Mike was interested too and even Lucas tried to read the title upside down.

'*Standard book of spells by Miranda Goshawk*,' Steve read.

'What is it?' Max asked. Amelia was afraid she would take her eyes off the road so she answered quickly.

'It's a spell book. My mom showed me this a long time ago. I am sure I can find something in here about fixing broken bones,' she said.

'Somehow, that doesn't sound standard to me,' Dustin said.

Amelia opened the book and looked in the index. There was a chapter about healing spells. She found the right page and started to read.

'Got it! *Brackium Emendo* is the incantation of a healing spell that can be used to mend broken bones. Perfect!'

'Ahh, did you read this though? *Warning*: if the spell is executed improperly the targeted bones will be removed rather than fixed,' Steve read. 'Amelia this sounds like a bad idea.'

'We are on our way to torch a tunnel system, hoping to get out on time. In a situation like that, I need my good arm to fire spells. Dustin, can you untie the sling?'

Dustin untied the knot on her shoulder and released her arm. It laid like a dead piece of meat in her lap.

'And what if you let your bones disappear? You got a spell for that too?' Steve asked, frantic to stop her.

'I'll figure something out,' she said without looking at him. She got her wand out in her wrong hand and pointed it at the exact place where she could see the bone being broken. Her aim was swaying with the movements of the car.

'I believe in you Amelia,' Dustin said. He placed his hands on her wrist to hold her steady.

'Thank you Dustin. Okay, let me concentrate.'

Amelia closed her eyes for a moment and remembered what it was like to use magic. The wand started to elicit sparks as it was eager to use the power she was summoning. When she opened her eyes she read the incantation one more time before looking at her arm and saying loud and clear: '*Brackium Emendo.*'

A blueish light came from her arm. There was a static feeling in the air and everyone held their breath. Amelia put the wand down and poked with a finger in her arm.

'Do you still have your bones?' Max asked, dying to turn around.

Amelia raised her arm and flexed her fingers. The pain was gone. Her arm was no mushy flesh hump.

'It's fixed,' Amelia breathed, not actually believing it.

'Holy shit that was cool!' Dustin said.

'Totally awesome!' Lucas brought in.

'Yeah. Pretty cool,' Mike said.

Amelia looked at Steve, who was relieved but not happy. 'You were lucky.'

'Or talented,' she said with a smile.

Steve sighed and leaned back. 'You think you can fix me too?'

Her face went white. 'Hell no! I'm not practicing on you! What if I was just lucky. Sorry Steve, not risking it.'

'But you risked it on yourself,' he said.

'Yeah. You would too,' she defended.

The rest of the car ride was silent.

The drive took too long. Steve had been calm for a couple of minutes but then the freaking out started again. He was tapping his feet on the ground and constantly jerking his head in all directions, afraid they would get attacked.

His wounds weren't doing any better either. One gash on his forehead had opened up and started leaking blood again. He kept rubbing at his eyes, despite everyone telling him to cut it.

'Once we get there, we turn this car around and drive to-,' he started again as the car turned into an open meadow.

'Steve?' Dustin said.

'What?'

'Shut up.'

Max sped over the field. The ride was getting bumpy and soon enough they were holding on to each other. They drove over a particularly big bump and both young adults were thrown back in their seat. What Max didn't notice was the giant hole at the other side of the bump.

'Whow, whow WHOW!' Steve yelled.

The girl hit the brakes and the car stopped just in time from tipping over the edge.

'Incredible,' Mike said, actually sounding sincere.

'I told you. Zoomer,' Max replied.

Then the doors flung open and the kids were out in a second. Amelia followed them, but Steve had a harder time getting out. His arms and legs swung in the air, searching for a hold.

Amelia noticed he was going to fall to the ground, but was just in time to catch him in her arms. Steve encircled her body quickly with his arms to hold steady. Amelia was using her strength to stand upright.

'Ugh, you got me,' Steve said, releasing a groan.

'Yeah, I did,' Amelia said. A blush flattered her cheeks again. *Why does this happen every time this boy is looking at me?*

Steve groaned some more and looked over to the kids. Amelia noticed that they all had goggles, rags over their mouths and gloves on. Mike walked around with a gasoline tank.

'Hey guys,' Steve said, sounding like he was about to faint. Amelia did notice that he was still holding her tight.

Then Mike passed, dismissing Steve. 'Hey, where do you think you're going?'

They continued to ignore him. 'Hey are you deaf? Hellooo!'

Amelia let Steve go when he seemed able to stand on both feet. 'I am still not letting you guys go in there!'

'I thought you were gonna be cool?' Dustin said calmly.

'Steve,' Amelia said softly.

'No! I don't want you dipshits in that hole! Am I making myself clear? There is no chance we are going in there!' He ran up to Dustin, who was packing his backpack. 'This ends right now!'

'Steve!' Amelia and Dustin yelled at the same time. 'You're upset, I get it. The bottom line is: a Party member requires assistance and it is our duty to provide that assistance,' Dustin said wisely.

'Is that also from D&D?' Amelia asked, listening to their argument with amusement. The near-death experience they were going to have down there seemed to only encourage her to smile more.

'Maybe. But it applies in real life. I told you before, we are all our

characters,' he said.

'You got something cool for me?' Amelia asked, the grin spreading.

'What?' Both Dustin and Steve asked.

She shrugged. 'I dunno. Seemed cool to be a Mage or Ranger or....'

'How about a Defender?' Dustin said, seeming into the conversation. 'Defenders protect themselves and their allies, usually with armour and shield. Maybe you can make a shield.'

Amelia laughed. 'Yes, that sounds perfect! I'll be your Defender!'

Steve looked incredulously. 'Why are you so relaxed? We are about to walk into-,'

Amelia waved his worries away. 'I know. But what is the point in being alive when you are not living?' She winked at Steve and followed the kids down the hole.

'The same goes for you Steve,' Dustin said, drawing his attention back. 'You promised Nancy to keep us safe. So keep us safe.' He held up a bag with the killer bat protruding. Steve almost rolled his eyes.

Steve and Amelia had gotten their protection too. Once Amelia had jumped down the rabbit hole, she realised why. The air was polluted by tiny particles flying around. It smelled horrible, of death and decay. The goggles kept the particles from flying in their eyes.

Steve landed lastly in the tunnel. He looked around as astounded as Amelia felt.

'Holy shit,' he whispered.

'I'll say,' she replied.

Suddenly Amelia felt a hand holding hers. Steve was next to her, leaning close. 'Don't worry okay. I've got you.'

Amelia could appreciate the heroic gesture, but felt a little put in her place. She squeezed his hand and let go. 'Yeah. And I've got you.'

'Okay! I'm pretty sure it's this way,' Mike said, reading a hand-drawn map.

'You're pretty sure or you're sure?' Dustin said.

'I'm a hundred percent sure just follow me and you'll know!' Mike yelled agitated.

'Whow, hey I don't think so,' Steve said, pulling Mike back as he tried to move on his own. 'Any of you little shits die down here I'm getting the blame. You got it, dipshit?'

He turned towards the others. 'I'm leading the way! Come on lets go. A little hustle!'

Everyone followed, trying to stay in line with leader Steve. Amelia couldn't help feeling like a duckling following its mom.

They walked for a long time in what seemed to be the same tunnels. Amelia hoped with all her heart that Steve knew what he was doing.

'Hey.'

Amelia turned around to see Max forming the rear of the group. 'I am sorry about your arm...and throat,' she said.

Amelia chuckled. 'None of that is your fault.'

'I know. But I just...I hate him so much. Anyway it doesn't matter. I just wanted to thank you for standing up for us,' she said with a small voice, hoping the guys in front wouldn't hear. She held her face down and looked smaller than she was.

'You know, I'm afraid you're still going to live with him and everything, but if you ever need a quick escape my home is just down the road. You're welcome anytime,' Amelia offered.

Max looked up. The fire in her eyes returned. 'Besides, I think things will chance after you stood up to him. I don't think he wants you or that bat near him.'

She chuckled. 'We found something,' Mike said from the front of the

group. The two girls became alert again as the tunnel opened up in a wider space. It looked like a room, connecting multiple tunnels.

'What is this place?' Max asked.

Steve didn't seem impressed or eager to stop. 'Come on. Keep moving.'

Amelia followed and didn't see Dustin stop and stare above him. They were already in a new tunnel when they heard screaming and yelling.

'Dustin!' Amelia yelled, being the first to turn around. Dustin stumbled until he hit the ground in front of her feet.

There was a lot of incoherent yelling until Steve pushed everyone aside, rushing to the little Henderson's side. 'What happened?!'

'It's in my mouth! Some got in my mouth! SHIIIT!' he coughed dramatically and Amelia was afraid he was going to cough up blood. Then he calmed down and sat back up, looking at Steve.

'I'm okay.'

There was a group sigh. 'Are you serious?' Max asked as Dustin got back on his feet.

'Very funny man. Nice,' Steve said, back on his feet. Everyone turned their backs on Dustin. Amelia helped the boy up.

'I get scared too,' she said softly. Dustin didn't reply, but he did hear her.

It didn't take long for them to find the spot they were looking for. This room was four times the size of the last room.

'All right Wheeler. I think we found your hub,' Steve said. Everyone was panting from the hike, Dustin still a little dazed over his accident. Amelia stood next to Steve and found his hand to hold.

'Let's drench it,' Mike said.

Everyone did as Mike said. They had brought sprayers and tanks full

of gasoline. Everyone took a spot and made sure the entire place was drenched.

'So you still know the way out?' Max asked Steve. 'You know, so we can run quickly.'

'I do,' Mike said. 'Everyone just follow me on the way out.'

'And what if you're wrong?' Dustin asked.

'I'm not wrong! Just trust me for once!' Mike defended, stopping his work for a moment.

'It's not about trust, Mike. It's about being a hundred percent sure you know the way or we all die!' Dustin yelled back.

'Do you know the way back then?' Mike asked.

Dustin looked around at the faces watching him. 'No. But I think it's better to follow Steve because he took the lead-'

'Oh so Steve is our Party leader now? You want to throw me out and make him the Paladin?' Mike said, sounding hurt.

Steve looked astounded. 'Uhh...I have no idea what that means.'

'Mike, no one is throwing you out. And this isn't a game, this is life or death!' Dustin was heating up with anger. Clearly some things were left unsaid between the boys.

'You have been trying to throw me out of the group for months! You keep making decisions without me. You can just say it, you know. If you hate me.' Mike crossed his arms over his chest.

Lucas walked into the conversation. 'We have been making decisions without you because you don't talk to us anymore. You come around less, we haven't been in your basement for almost a month now and you never seem to like the things we do! How can we make you a part of the Party if you don't want to be in it?'

This seemed to take the Wheeler boy back. He hadn't expected *two* friends to turn against him. He looked over at Max, who stayed quiet



and hoped not to be noticed.

'I don't want to be in it when she is in it!' He said, pointing his finger at the new girl.

'That is mean and low,' Lucas said, stepping closer to his friend.

'Hey, hey, guys. Let's not do this now, okay?' Amelia said, afraid something would hear them yelling.

'No we need to do this now,' Mike said.

'Agreed,' Max said, standing next to Lucas and Dustin and looking down at Mike. 'How about you tell me what I did to you? And don't start with the 'you're annoying' stuff, I don't buy it.'

Mike looked from the one friend to the other, deciding what to do. Everyone waited for his answer.

'I hate to see it, okay? I hate to see the two of you befriending a girl and forgetting the one we lost! Or...I thought we lost.'

'I knew it,' Lucas said.

'Always the same,' Dustin sighed.

Mike pulled up an eyebrow. 'What?'

'You do realise there are more people in the world than El, right?' Lucas said, sounding just a bit too harsh.

'I missed her-,'

'Yes Mike! We get that! We got that all of those days! And you know what? We missed her too! But we also understand that life goes on and you better make the best of it, instead of looking miserable every day of your life!' Dustin said, releasing all the built up stress he was holding back.

'Being totally obsessed over someone is fine, but you need to see other people too. Look at Steve,' Dustin said, holding his hand out to the babysitter of the group. Amelia half expected a spotlight to shine

on him. 'Steve was totally in love with Nancy. But Nancy lost her interest and found Jonathan, and now Steve is moving on. He found a new girlfriend and knew how to move on.'

The two teenagers looked at each other in stunned silence.

'I don't think we are a great example,' Amelia said, blushing under her rag.

Steve rubbed the back of his neck. 'Not really, no.'

'Anyway,' Lucas said, getting the attention back, 'What we are trying to say Mike, is that we want our friend back.'

Mike was silent for a moment. He seemed to have a hard time processing all this. He looked up at his friends.

'I want that too,' he said with a small voice.

Dustin and Lucas held out theirs hands simultaneously. Mike looked at it for a moment before shaking both hands. Then Max stretched her arm out and Mike seemed taken aback.

'Can you accept that I am a girl and not trying to steal Eleven's place, but would like to make my own in your group?' she asked.

Mike took a moment longer before shaking her hand. 'Yeah, sure.'

'Okay,' Steve said loudly, making everyone look at him. 'Enough with the heart-to-heart. We're setting this place on fire. Everyone behind me in that tunnel.'

They complied without further ado and everyone got behind Steve. He pulled a lighter from his pocket and crouched down.

'Alright you guys ready?' he said, sounding nervous.

Amelia placed a hand firmly on his shoulder. 'You got this Steve.'

Dustin sat next to Steve as he encouraged him too. 'Light her up.'

'I'm in such deep shit.'

Then the lighter was airborne and soon hit the gasoline-drenched floor of the hub. The entire thing went up in flames. Fast.

A horrible sound filled the space. The vines that had laid dead on the ground before were now flailing wildly. The shrieking sound seemed to come *from* the vines. They all fell back when a huge fireball went up.

'Go! Let's go!' Steve yelled as everyone got up and started running. Steve was soon back at the front. He kept yelling to keep moving. Dustin was swearing on loop and Mike sounded real scared. Amelia made up the back of the line, quick to react might anyone fall over. Amelia was happy someone else seemed to remember the way. To her, all the tunnels looked the same. They came at multiple junctions but Steve was so confident in his choices that Amelia didn't doubt him.

However his confidence seemed to seep away with every choice. Amelia noticed, and she was sure Steve did as well, that they were running for a longer time than anticipated. He pulled out the map and doubted for a second before screaming again: 'This way!'

She was so lost in her fear of getting lost in the tunnels full of demodogs that she missed how Mike tripped and fell. Before she could react a vine had wound itself around his leg.

'Help! Help!'

Amelia was so shocked that the vines could move that she was slow to respond. The others had rushed back and were pulling at the vines.

'Amelia!' Steve yelled.

She shook awake, pointed her wand at the spot where the vine started and yelled: '*Reducto!*'

The vine snapped in two and the part that held Mike became lifeless.

Mike scrambled back to his feet and looked at Amelia.

'The vines move,' Amelia breathed.

'Yeah, we should have mentioned that. Thanks,' he said.

'No problem.'

'Okay, we gotta go, we gotta go,' Steve said.

Before they could move, there was a new sound behind them. Everyone turned around to see a demodog standing between them and the tunnel where they needed to go.

Dustin took a step forward. Steve put a hand on his shoulder.

'Dart?'

Despite everything Amelia took for real this crazy night, something impossible happened. The demodog stood still and seemed to be listening to Dustin.

'Dustin-,' Amelia started and everyone tuned in to speak their protest. Dustin held up his arm.

'Trust me. Please.'

Dustin stared the demodog down and Amelia was torn between thinking he was stupid and brilliant.

'Hey, it's me. It's your friend, Dustin,' he said, taking his protection off to be recognizable. Amelia wondered whether that helped, since the monster had no eyes.

'You remember me?' he said softly. The demodog made an odd, tame sound. 'Will you let us pass?'

Then the mouth opened and it roared. Amelia grabbed Steve's hand. They looked at each other with similar worried expressions about their friend. Then they let go.

'Okay. I'm sorry about the storm cellar. That was a pretty douchy thing to do. You hungry?'

'How is that the best question?' Lucas whispered angrily.

Dustin got his bag out and opened it up.

'He's insane,' Lucas whispered again, but was shushed this time by Steve and Mike.

'I've got our favorite. See? Nougat.'

Somehow the creature seemed to understand what he was saying, or he could smell the chocolate. It looked at Dustin as he unwrapped the wrapping. Everyone held their breaths.

'Yummy. Here. Alright,' Dustin said, sounding more tense as he had to extend his arm to place the chocolate on the ground.

'Eat up buddy,' he said. His arm gestured for the other to pass while it was eating.

Max was the first to pass, quickly jumping past the demodog. Steve followed, then Mike, then Lucas.

'There's plenty. I've got more,' Dustin kept talking.

Amelia wanted to wait but Dustin gestured for her to walk on too. She passed the demodog, having mixed feelings about it. She could whip out her wand and kill it. But somehow that didn't seem so easy anymore. As she had read the book of spells and started to use it more she started to understand a little bit what it meant to use that curse.

That, and Dustin seemed able to handle it.

When they had all passed the domestic monster, Dustin looked back to say: 'Goodbye buddy.'

Amelia placed a hand on his shoulder. He looked up at her with sad eyes. Amelia gave a crooked smile back and they continued on their way.

Soon they started to remember their hurry and they started running down the tunnels.

'Come on let's go!' Steve yelled from the front again.

'I feel like we've been here before,' Lucas noted.

'Well Steve knew the way,' Mike said, sounding bitter.

'Shut up, okay! I know we are almost there,' Steve said, looking at the map as he walked.

'I told you to follow me,' Mike started.

'Mike I thought you were gonna stop being an asshole!' Dustin said.

'Not when we are going to die because Steve is suddenly your idol!,' Mike retorted.

'Guys!' Amelia yelled, affectively shutting everyone up. 'I see the rope.'

They sprinted down the tunnel and soon enough they all saw the rope and the clear night sky above.

'Yes! I never doubted you Steve!' Dustin said.

Then the ground shook like an earthquake. Everyone tumbled over.

'What was that?' Max asked.

A sound in the distance was heard were they came from. 'They're coming,' Mike said. 'Run! Get up!'

Steve, completely in panic mode, reached the robe first and stood ready to help the others up. Max went up first, followed by Lucas. At this rate, they were going too slow. Amelia kept her eyes fixed on the end of the tunnel. More and more sounds came from it. It was clearly going to be more than one demodog.

'Amelia get back here!' Steve yelled as he pushed Mike's legs over the edge of the hole. She had taken some steps towards the sound.

'We're not gonna make it in time.'

'We will if you hurry!'

Then they saw shadows on the walls. They were running fast. Steve

picked up the bat he had dropped and held it in front of Dustin.

'Dustin, get up,' Amelia breathed, being afraid she wouldn't be able to defend them.

'No time,' he said with a small voice.

A second later they were there. The first demodogs burst into view and their mouths snapped open. Hungry for blood.

'No!' She heard Dustin shriek.

'Don't worry Dustin,' Amelia said, feeling the magic flow through her body stronger than ever before.

'I'm your defender.'

The witch from Hawkins swung her wand up and stood between her friends and the monsters.

*'Protego!'*

A white blinding light erupted from the wand and created a dome around the three people in the tunnel. It closed just in time as one of the demodogs rushed headfirst into the shield. He was shot back by the force.

Some of the monsters didn't even try and continued to run past them. But some others would test the shield, angry with the people that torched their home. Demodog after demodog threw themselves at the shield but it wouldn't break. Wouldn't even flicker. Amelia was strongly motivated to keep Steve and Dustin safe and that is what she would do.

The energy to perform the spell was draining from her. Soon enough she would be left with too little power to continue the steady flow she had now. It felt like she needed to hold stacks of porcelain plates while someone was bumping into her every other second.

Then it was over. The last few decided it wasn't worth the effort as they continued without attacking. It was quiet in the tunnel.

Amelia turned around to notice two things. The first was that Steve had held Dustin tight to protect him with his body. The other was a voice from above, saying: 'Eleven.'

Then Amelia fell down. Her legs gave way to her bodyweight and she crashed to the dirty, vine-covered floor.

Steve and Dustin let each other go and rushed over to her side.

'Amelia! Are you okay?' Dustin asked, his voice on the edge of panic.

Amelia smiled at him. 'Of course I'm fine. Just a little...tired.'

Steve placed his hand under her head for support. 'You're insane.'

'You're awesome.'

Amelia and Steve looked at Dustin, who had a great grin on his face. It was impossible to look at that and not laugh yourself. Amelia and Steve both chuckled, letting the nerves flow out a bit.

'Okay Miss witch,' Steve said with a smirk on his face, 'let's get you out of here.'



## 12. Chapter 12

### The snowball

(and how we didn't go)

*One month later*

'That is disgusting!'

'I know, but-'

'It's horrible. The stuff of nightmares!'

'Oh come on, you are exaggerating.'

'No! There is no excuse for this poor excuse of a dress,' Claire said as she held up the dress that Amelia had picked.

The witch held her hands out in despair. 'Okay! Point taken! My style is not as on point as I thought. Still, this is a nice dress and I think-,'

Claire moved her index finger, indicating no. 'You don't get to think anymore if this is the choice you come up with. How about-,' it took her three seconds to hold a new dress up, 'this one.'

The dress Claire was holding up was a dark red colour, with long sleeves and no shoulders. It would probably reach just above Amelia's knees.

'I'll try it.'

'You like it, don't you.'

'I'm not sure about the length of the skirt,' Amelia said, taking the clothing item and stepping inside one of the fitting rooms.

Claire put her hand to her forehead and rubbed at her headache. 'About a month ago you showed up with short skirts every day of the week. Why are you turning them into your enemy?'

'Not my enemy,' Amelia's reply came from behind the curtain, 'but I just care about them less.'

'Oh my god it took you a month,' Claire said, gasping dramatically.

'What did?'

'For you to feel so comfortable with your boyfriend that you stop caring what you look like. Most girls take much longer than a month.'

Amelia smiled to herself inside the fitting room. She did feel comfortable with Steve Harrington, her boyfriend. She smiled every time someone brought him up or when she was thinking about him.

So in general, Amelia smiled a lot more these days.

'I don't get why the hell you two don't go public,' Claire said, inspecting her nails.

Amelia pushed the curtain open and stepped out. She looked in the mirror. The dress was actually very flattering on her body. It hid all the little scars she had gotten from her adventure a month ago. She felt confident in it.

'Perfect,' Claire commented.

'You know why we keep it a secret. I can't handle the judgemental looks of people at school,' Amelia said, twirling in the dress.

'That's bullshit.'

'Steve says the same.'

'Then maybe you should listen to your boyfriend *and* best friend.'

Amelia sighed and turned around. 'Claire, it's been only a month. Barbara has been buried and Nancy is having a hard time. They sympathize more with that girl now than ever. I don't want to be the bitch that broke her relationship.'

'Claire held up her hand. 'Okay. One: you *are* the bitch that broke up the relationship. So is Jonathan. Get over it. Two: Nancy and

Jonathan have been holding hands from the beginning so I think people don't care about Stancy anymore. Three: I thought you were friends with Nancy now.'

Amelia sat down. 'I am. Friends with Nancy. And she sort of knows, but we never really talked about it. Besides you, my parents and Dustin nobody knows Steve and I are together.'

The flashback hit Amelia like a brick wall.

*'Mike! Are you okay?!'*

*'Yeah, we're fine. Don't worry Nance.'*

*'I thought you guys were staying here. Where it's safe.'* An angry glare was directed at Steve.

*'Steve wanted us to stay too. But he was unconscious and then we dragged him in the car,'* Dustin said, walking by the Wheelers with a sandwich in his hand.

*'Dustin, can you stop telling people I was out?'* Steve huffed, placing his hands on his hips.

*'No, it adds up to the coolness of the story.'*

*'Dustin, I swear, one day I will-'*

*'Hug you till death because we are all still alive,'* Amelia said from her position on the couch. Slowly everyone started streaming back in the byers house. Eleven and Hopper had arrived some time ago. Hopper had ranted about how dangerous their expedition was and Eleven had only hugged Mike without letting go. Amelia had to rest, so she laid on the couch.

*And then the remaining party members had streamed in. Will was still very weak but he got around to hug everyone. He was confused to see Amelia in his living room, but in the end they hugged too. Amelia had a surge of protectiveness flowing through her. Right then she decided: nothing bad is ever going to happen to this kid again. He is under my protection.*

*Jonathan and Nancy had been awkward the entire time. It was obvious*

*they wanted some alone time. Amelia couldn't blame them. She wanted to be with Steve too.*

*After everyone sat around the coffee table and had a warm drink in their hands, the phone rang. Joyce got up to answer it.*

*'Who would call in the middle of the night?' Will asked. Some heads snapped in the direction of Joyce, eager to know the answer to that.*

*'Amelia it's for you,' Joyce said.*

*Amelia got up from the couch and held the phone to her ear.*

*'Amelia Thompson.'*

*'Miss Thompson. This is Mandy Smith from Hawkins hospital. I call you with good news.'*

*Amelia's heart stopped and she hung up quickly after she heard the good news. She dived for Steve's jacket he had offered her against the cold and located her car keys. Somehow her vehicle had remained whole despite the demodogs walking around earlier.*

*'What is it?' Steve asked, getting up too.*

*Amelia had tears in her eyes as she smiled up to him.*

*'She's awake.'*

*A lot of things had happened in the past month. Hestia had woken up from her coma and was so relieved to see her daughter again. Amelia had thrown herself on the hospital bed to crush her mother in a hug.*

*Her father had shown up too. They were all so relieved to see Hestia awake again that the past fight seemed forgotten. Scott hadn't done nothing in the days he was gone. He had decided to drive to Pittsburgh and search out a witch. He had hired her.*

*Amelia couldn't believe her ears when her father told her he was okay with her learning magic. However, sending her off to a castle was too much for him, so he hired a tutor that would help Amelia out. She would continue her high school and learn magic in the*

weekends.

For the first time in a long time her family felt whole. So it didn't take her long to announce to them that her boyfriend was coming over for dinner. Steve was the absolute best with parent dinners. He had charmed her mother and spoken sports and farming with her father. He even dared bringing up the magic subject and it worked out fine.

Steve Harrington was her boyfriend. Amelia hadn't gotten used to the idea yet. After their terrible decision to sleep together on their first night, they decided to take things slow now. There was a lot of long car rides and talking involved. Amelia would help Steve with homework and he helped her in sports. Amelia had wanted to grow more muscle since her horrible punch at Billy. The two worked together more like two best friends than a couple. But that didn't mean there was no 'couple action'. They had shared kisses and a lot of hugs. They were physical in the innocent way, holding each other dearly and staring in the other's eyes for a long time.

It was so much better than Amelia had dared to dream. The pieces of her puzzle fell together. Her life was on the rails. Mostly. There was one thing that could break her mood every time.

*That curse.*

As she started her lessons with the tutor and read more about the spells, the horror of her deed seeped in deeper. She didn't have the courage to talk about it, but it was the only thing breaking her perfect bubble.

That and Claire snapping her fingers in front of her face.

'Wow you zoned out good,' she said, inspecting her friend.

'Sorry,' Amelia said in a haze. 'Anyway, let me pay for this dress. To be fair, it is perfect.'

'Told you.'

The two best friends walked down the street in the town centre. They continued their chats about the upcoming Snow Ball. It was a school

dance for the junior classes and usually the seniors wouldn't attend this. However Amelia wanted to take a quick look around, hoping to blend in with the volunteers. She knew Dustin, Mike, Lucas, Max and Will would be there and that it was their first time.

After the encounter with the demodogs a month ago Amelia had grown very fond of the group. Dustin felt the closest, but it was mostly Steve who kept going over to his house or invited him to go out with them. Amelia found it strange at first, but she grew just as fond of Dustin as Steve was.

Mike made a good effort to look disinterested in Amelia, but she knew he was secretly talking about her a lot. He was impressed by her magic and saw her as some sort of angel guardian. He would of course never show this, but Dustin liked to gossip.

Max and Lucas were spending more and more time together. They felt the least connected to Amelia, but Max came over every once in a while at Amelia's home. She would be particularly done with her family and spend some hours with the Thompsons.

Will was the most difficult to reach, but also the one Amelia felt most compelled to spend time with. He had his friends and everybody was happy he was okay, but he couldn't have a normal life. Not when his mother wouldn't let him alone for the shortest period. She had been like that since his first disappearance too, but she had doubled the security now. However Will seemed to be quite alright. Considering what he had been through...

Claire had agreed to take Amelia dress shopping for the ball to make sure she would look good and appropriate for a gym full of thirteen- and fourteen-year-olds. The two girls stopped walking when someone stood in front of them.

'Hello sir. Did we do anything wrong? We paid for those, I swear,' Claire stuttered.

Amelia chuckled. 'Way to look suspicious Claire.' She looked up at the chief. 'Hey Hopper.'

'Thompson,' he said shortly. He placed his hands on his belt and

looked down at the two teenagers. 'I am not too eager to ask you this, but I need to.'

Amelia raised an eyebrow in amusement. The chief was out of his element. In the last month they seemed to get on better terms, but it was a slow process.

'What do you need?' she asked.

Hopper sighed and let his hands fall to his sides. 'Your help.'

Later that afternoon Amelia sat cross-legged on the couch in a cottage in the middle of the woods, styling the hair of a thirteen-year-old girl with superpowers. Eleven had looked with frightful eyes when Amelia showed up with a curling iron. She had asked what torture it was used for and Amelia had just laughed and demonstrated the thing on her own hair. Once Eleven figured it was safe she let Amelia do her hair.

'Are you excited?' Amelia asked as she busied herself with the short hairs at the bottom.

'Yes,' was the reply.

'After I'm done with you the guys won't be able to keep their eyes off you.'

'Hmm.'

'Including Mike.'

It was like a code word. The cue for her was so start smiling brightly. Eleven had her back turned to Amelia but she could tell by the way she sat up straighter.

They were distracted for a moment by Hopper. He was frantically walking around the cottage. He had bought a dress for Eleven a week ago and couldn't find it anymore. Amelia didn't stress. She had learned a summoning spell last week, but liked to let Hopper run around first.

'You told me our powers are different,' Eleven said.

Amelia had been fixated on taming a particularly stubborn curl. 'Sorry what?'

'When we spoke in Will's room. You told me we have different kind of powers. That yours is yours and mine is mine,' Eleven elaborated.

'Yes, I remember,' Amelia said.

'How do you know?'

Amelia let her hair go for a moment and thought about it. 'Well, I know that people are born with magic or not. But...I'm not actually sure you were born without. Do you want to test it?'

Eleven turned her head around to look the older girl in her eyes. 'Yes.'

Amelia put the iron away and stretched her hands out for Eleven. 'Take my hands,' she instructed.

Eleven mimicked her position on the couch and placed her hands in Amelia's.

'Alright. Close your eyes. I am going to reach out to you. Don't pull away if you feel a little shock. It won't hurt, okay?'

'Okay.'

Amelia concentrated and found her magic. As she had done with her wand before, she was now trying to send that magic towards Eleven. If there was a similar power within her, she would respond and there would be a spark. Amelia send the magic through her hands, searching for a response.

A little time passed before Amelia opened her eyes and let Eleven's hands go.

'Sorry. No response,' she said, a little sad.

'What response?' Eleven asked, crooking her head a little.

'A magic response. Sorry El, you don't have magic. Your powers are



different. It means I can't learn what you can, and you can't learn what I can.'

'Oh,' Eleven said, looking down.

Amelia leaned in. 'But it doesn't mean you can't share in the fun. *Accio dress.*'

The dress Hopper was looking for had been in the closet all this time. It gracefully flew through the room and landed on the dinner table.

'There it is! I swear it wasn't there a moment ago!' He said, both relieved and a little agitated.

Amelia held her finger to her lips and Eleven giggled.

'I'm scared.'

'You don't have to be. It will be fine.'

'I don't know all those people.'

'But you know a few,' Amelia said, holding Eleven's hands in hers. 'And there is one guy in there dying to see you. Do you want to let him wait?'

Eleven seemed to remember why she was here, standing in the hallway to the Snow Ball.

'No.'

'Then go in and slay them.'

'Slay? Like kill?'

'No, no, no! God no! I mean: show them how beautiful you are. Show Mike,' Amelia said, winking at the end.

Eleven found her courage and walked through the doors into the gym. Amelia saw how Mike noticed her from across the room and they walked up to each other. *Every breath you take* from the Police was playing. A chill went across Amelia's back but she wasn't cold.

Then she went through the doors too.

The preparations for the snow ball had brought her closer to Eleven, even if it was just for one afternoon. She felt both protective and hesitant about the girl. Amelia couldn't let their earlier conversation go. The one where Eleven seemed unbothered by killing. Even if it was about monsters, killing shouldn't come so natural. And most of all not for a kid her age.

Amelia took a stroll around the outer edge of the dancefloor. It took her a moment to locate everyone. Lucas and Max were dancing, holding each other very close. Mike and Eleven looked like the world fell away around them. Dustin was dancing with Nancy, and it caused Amelia to smile brightly. Will was harder to spot, since he was so small. Eventually she found him too, dancing with a girl who was a head bigger.

Amelia placed herself on the tribune, watching everyone dance. Just looking at the kids that meant so much to her since a month ago made her feel warm and happy. She witnessed Max going in for a kiss with Lucas, and moments later Mike did the same with Eleven. Amelia was squealing with happiness. After everything they went through, they deserved all the happiness.

'Hey.'

Amelia looked up from her new favourite two couples to notice Will standing next to her.

'Hey Will. Where is your date?' she asked, winking.

'Uhm...she walked away. I stood on her toes too often,' he said ashamed.

'That bitch,' Amelia huffed. It made him chuckle softly.

'Apart from that, are you having fun?' she asked, looking at the small boy. He looked so much better than a month ago. After the entire possession thing it took a long time before he looked healthy again. He had been way too skinny and there were permanent dark circles under his eyes. Now he seemed better fed and he had a small blush

on his cheeks from the heat in the gym.

'Yeah, I think so. I see Eleven is here. Mike must be so happy,' he said, distracted by his friend dancing with the girl of his dreams.

'I asked if *you* were having fun. How do you feel?' Amelia asked, trying not to sound like the thousand-and-one person to ask him if he was okay.

'I dunno..a little tired,' he said.

'Bullshit.'

'What?'

Will looked at her with a confused expression. Amelia stared back at him for a moment before standing up and offering her hand.

'I said bullshit. Your friends are dancing with pretty girls and you sit here talking to me. I might not be as pretty as El, Max or Nancy, but would you like to dance with me?'

Will stared in pure horror for a moment. Then he shook his head and followed Amelia onto the dancefloor. She placed her arms on his shoulders and they started dancing. Will found his rhythm and started to smile again.

'See? You're doing awesome!' Amelia encouraged. She caught Nancy's eye over Will's shoulder and the two shared a smile.

Will stood on her toes. 'Sorry!'

Amelia leaned in to whisper in his ear. 'I'm a bit tougher than most girls.'

And it was true. She was still sporting a bandage wrapped around her leg where the demodog had bitten her, but it was mostly to cover up the ugly wound. Pieces of flesh were missing and Amelia felt disgusted looking at it. It was also a reminder. A reminder to never let her guard down again and be ready when she needed to be.

'I am not trying to hurt you, just so you know,' Will said, the blush

spreading.

Amelia laughed. 'I know Will.'

They danced through three songs and Will started to get the hang of it. They tried more complicated steps and there was no stepping on toes anymore.

'You just needed a chance, that's all,' Amelia said.

'And a great teacher,' he said.

'Well obviously,' Amelia said with a fake posh accent as she threw her hair over her shoulder. Will laughed. Not just a smile but a full on laugh. It made Amelia laugh as well.

'Amelia?' he asked, suddenly shy again.

'Yes?'

'Do you...do you think you'll come over to our house again?'

'If you promise me I won't get attacked again, sure,' she joked.

'I'm serious. I mean...I don't know if Jonathan and you are still friends, but...I would like to have you come over sometimes,' he said, too shy to look her in the eyes.

'Jonathan and I are still friends, don't worry. But I can also come for you, you know. We are friends too.'

He looked up at her again. 'Really?'

'Of course. I am already hanging out with Dustin. Which is still a bit weird. Steve invites him over when we have dates...but I am getting used to it.' She laughed at the fond memory of Dustin jumping out of the blue when she had tried to kiss Steve. That seemed to become a habit.

Will had a new sparkle in his eyes. 'Dates? You are dating Steve Harrington?'

Amelia realised her mistake. She bit her lip and groaned. 'I talk too much. Please don't tell the others.'

'But Dustin knows?' Will asked, a mischievous smile on his lips.

'Yeah, he knows. But if Mike knows, Nancy knows. And I'm not ready to have her rage directed at me. So please save me,' she pleaded.

'Your secret is safe with me,' Will said as he chuckled.

Amelia smiled. 'Thanks. Now, to come back to your previous question, can I ask why you want me over at your house? Do you feel safe if I'm around? Or is it my stunning beauty that you're after?'

Will snorted. 'Tewl, gross. No. It's your friendship actually. That and your jokes.'

She raised an eyebrow. 'My jokes?'

'Yeah. You joke about what happened all the time. You aren't shy to talk about what happened, and your jokes make it less serious. Everybody treats me like I'm made of porcelain and will break any moment. You treat me like...like a person.'

Amelia tried desperately to hold back tears. His words meant so much to her, but they also stung. Because he was being treated unfair.

'Not everybody does that. The boys don't, do they?' she asked, keeping her voice steady.

'Sometimes,' he replied with a shrug.

Amelia sniffed and cleared her throat. 'Well, I'll have a good word with them then. Mom Amelia has got your back.'

Will laughed again. 'Thank you...mom. Gosh that's weird.'

Then they both laughed. The next song was more up-tempo and they decided to go for a drink. They found the entire group standing there, talking with each other.

'Amelia! I didn't know you would be here,' Max said, the first one to notice them walking up.

'Surprise,' Amelia said, throwing her hands out enthusiastically.

'I didn't see you. Were you dancing too?' Mike asked, trying not to sound too interested.

'Well, this super-hot guy asked me to dance, so what can a girl do?' she said, leaning on Will's shoulder. He did feel weak and fragile under her weight, but he didn't want to be treated as a porcelain doll so she wouldn't. The others laughed at her statement.

'Actually she dragged me. I didn't even want to dance with her,' Will said, sounding tough.

She placed a hand dramatically on her heart. 'That hurts my heart Will.'

A new round of giggles was heard. Amelia looked around at the happy faces of her friends. She might be four years older than them, but that didn't matter right now. She was surrounded by faces of people she cared a lot about and would do anything for.

That is what friends are.

'Hey Amelia if you hurry Steve might still be here,' Dustin said then.

And suddenly the joke-queen turned into the blushing girl again. She looked everywhere but at Nancy, who was standing close enough to have heard it.

And she did.

'Steve?' She asked. 'What is he doing here?'

'He was my ride, but I'm going home with Lucas. So, you know. You can-,' he said to Amelia who was holding her hands up in a *please stop* motion.

'So you and Steve can what?' Nancy asked, directing it now towards Amelia.

'N-nothing. Dustin is delusional.'

'Am not!'

'Yes you are,' Lucas said.

'Kind of,' Mike tuned in.

'Am not! They are together now. I am the only one who knows!' Dustin said proudly. After a moment he seemed to understand his mistake.

'Not anymore,' Amelia said. Her heart was ready to jump out of her ribcage.

There was an uncomfortable moment. Will gave Dustin a *well done* look. Eleven looked confused and asked Mike to explain what was going on.

'It doesn't matter. You are dating Jonathan now, right?' Mike said.

Nancy looked at her brother. 'Yes, but-,'

'No but. Amelia and Steve belong together. They worked together as a team when we were in the tunnels.'

'Without them I would be dead,' Dustin tuned in.

'All of us would be dead without them,' Lucas said.

Nancy seemed stressed. 'Can you guys give us a minute?'

After a lot of protest everyone walked away except for Amelia and Nancy.

'So you are together with Steve?' she asked, a 'no-bullshit' expression on her face.

Amelia felt herself become small. 'Yeah...'

'How long?'

'Ever since the Demodog night.'

Nancy crossed her arms. 'No, I don't believe that. When you entered the house Steve was already pleased to see you. The truth please.'

Amelia took a deep gulp of air. 'Since the Halloween party. Well, not dating, but we sort of talked and he was sad because you told him you didn't want him that night and he needed support so I gave it. I sort of had a crush on Steve since last year, when he stopped being douchebag "King Steve". On Halloween I decided to cut my hair and be confident about myself and Steve noticed and I think that is when he got feelings for me. After what we went through on that weird night we found support in each other to stop us from going insane. I realise that you two only split up recently and that both of you still have some feelings for the other, but you moved on with Jonathan and Steve moved on with me. I think it is better this way, because no one is left alone in the cold. So, yeah, I'm dating Steve Harrington and Monday morning I will spread the word around the school and everyone else who wants to know. I don't care what people think of me anymore.'

Nancy just stared quietly at the girl delivering her monologue. 'Wow,' she said, 'That was more than I expected.'

Amelia rubbed the back of her neck. 'You wanted the truth.'

Nancy nodded. 'Right. Well, thank you for that.'

Amelia looked incredulous. 'That's it? Thank you? You're not going to yell at me?'

'Why should I? As my wise little brother said: It doesn't matter what I think. I'm dating Jonathan,' she said with a wink. A smile returned to her face.

'I care what *you* think of me, Nance. We are friends...right?' Amelia asked unsure.

Nancy pulled the other girl in for a hug. 'Yes we are silly. That is why you needed to tell me the truth. I noticed you seemed scared of me lately and I wanted to clear the air.'

'Thanks. I'm an idiot.'



The two let go. 'Well, luckily he is too. Talking of which: I think you should go,' Nancy said, motioning towards the door.

'Yeah. Good plan. Thanks Nance! We'll catch up soon!' Amelia said as she started to walk away.

Then she stopped and turned around. 'One more thing. I exploded your pen in class.'

'You little-,'

'Gotta run!' Amelia waved as she ran to the door.

'There you are.'

Steve was startled. He jerked upright in his car seat and hit his knee against the dashboard. He rubbed the sore place and looked at the girl outside his car, her arms resting on his windowsill.

'Hey Amelia. What are you doing here? Weren't you going to be at the dance?' he said, taking her in with his eyes. Amelia smiled and rounded the car to get in in the passenger seat. She rubbed his knee shortly as a sorry gesture.

'That was the plan. But something missed in there,' she said with a cheeky grin.

Steve raised an eyebrow and searched his brains for the answer. 'And that is?'

'You silly!'

'Oh, yeah. Right,' Steve said, feeling stupid.

Amelia dropped the big grin and became more serious. Steve wasn't in a mood for joking. He kept running a hand through his hair and glanced quickly in her direction.

'What happened?' she asked.

Steve closed his eyes and sighed deeply. After taking a long moment he stared at Amelia with new eyes. The worry seemed to be gone.

The troubles on his mind washed away.

'Nothing. I'm just glad to see you,' he responded. He was completely honest. Amelia understood something had been on his mind when she found him sitting here, but it seemed to be gone. She smiled at him.

'Me too,' she whispered.

About five minutes passed in complete silence. The two stared into each other's eyes all the while. The music from the gym could still be heard in the distance. Amelia felt completely content with the moment. There was no awkward moment. There were no unsaid words. There was only understanding and drawing comfort from the other.

Steve broke eye contact first. He blinked a couple of times and looked down at her hand. He picked her hand up and there was a small electric shock between them.

'Did you do that?' he asked, his interest still in her hand.

'No. That was just static electricity,' she replied.

Steve ran a finger over the back of her hand, tracing patterns. 'You're getting stronger. I can feel it. I can't explain how, but you seem... loaded.'

Amelia nodded slowly. 'Yes, I am getting stronger. Miss Ward said I learn quick.'

Steve nodded, his thoughts far away. There was another silence before he spoke his mind.

'So where do we go from here?'

It was a difficult question, and an even harder answer. Amelia knew that she wanted to be with Steve. In a boyfriend-girlfriend situation. After her talk with Nancy, Amelia had realised that she didn't care about people's opinions anymore. What is the point in trying to be normal if you can be extraordinary?

There was still a year of senior year left before graduating. Steve would graduate soon. He was still torn between studying or working for his father. He was content with both, as long as he was with Amelia. As long as they could have moments where they could sit down and think about everything that had happened to them. The witch talked a lot with the other people that were involved in the interdimensional shenanigans. They would speak their minds and hope to find peace. Those moments were great, but nothing compared to sitting in silence with Steve while both went back to those horrible images. Sometimes one started crying, and the other would comfort them. Steve and Amelia had an understanding and bond that was stronger than ever.

They didn't even have sex. It felt wrong now, because they had screwed it up before. That night wasn't a bad night. They didn't hurt one another. But it was just so bad a timing. Sometimes Amelia would think back on that night and wonder what it would be like to do those dirty things again, but now without the guilty feeling. She could imagine that it strengthened the bond she and Steve had. That they would feel closer. However, Amelia didn't need sex. Not yet.

'I don't know,' Amelia said in the middle of a long silence. 'I have no freaking clue. Maybe the gate breaks open again and we have to deal with the mind flayer. Maybe I meet some witch or wizard that is willing to show me the world I should have grown up in. Maybe I just go to history and not listen to Miss Canterbury for another year and a half.'

Steve chuckled and continued to stare at her meaningfully in the eye.

'But I do know I want to do all of that with you,' she finished.

His eyes were so big. They begged her to take care of him.

'I want you at my side too. Every day. Every night.'

Amelia leaned in to Steve to place a soft kiss on his lips. The kiss was sweet and a bit rough, because Steve's lips were chapped from the cold. She pulled back, but Steve wasn't done. He grabbed her cheek in his palm and pulled her face back to his. He kissed her back, hungry for contact. Their lips moved in sync with each other. A soft

moan left Amelia's throat as Steve pulled back.

Steve stroked her hair behind her ear. 'You look beautiful.'

'You'll have to thank Claire for the choice of dress,' she joked.

'I meant in general,' Steve whispered as his eyes took in every inch of her face. Amelia wanted to reply. Wanted to say something that held meaning too. It took her some time to figure what she wanted to say.

'If I look at our future from here, I see a lot of hand holding and stolen kisses. I see you on the other side of the hallway in the school, as you smile and come over to me. I see long drives in your car with just us, good music and the road. I see afternoons babysitting Dustin and hanging out with all of those weirdo's. I see us falling asleep in each other's arms.'

Steve smiled.

'I see happiness.'

The end.

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Thank you for reading my story. I hope you enjoyed it :)

Now, I have an idea for a sequel. Yes I do. But it is going in a slightly different direction. I'll give you a summary. If I get a lot of comments and reviews telling me to write it, I will.

*Life is pretty full when you are part-time American teenage girl, part-time witch. Amelia finally gets what she wanted all along: a chance to learn magic. Hawkins is thrown upside down when a new wizarding family arrives for their holiday. Amelia never expected the 20-year-old wizard to have such an impact on her. Or his three best friends for that matter.*

*Unfortunately the Wizarding World isn't all fun. Amelia gets invested in a time of war, and is torn between helping her new friends and staying with her beloved boyfriend and his gang of dipshits.*

**For this story I need you to feel comfortable with a twist of 4 years on the Harry Potter timeline. I want you to imagine the first war against Voldemort to still be raging in 1984.**

**I want you to imagine James Potter still being alive.**